

Mystery

Embracing the mysterious nature of God through the book of Job

Disoriented October 8
Deserted October 22
Silenced October 29
Restored November 5 (St. Mark's)

Sunday, October 22, 2023
St. James and St. Mark's United Church of Christ
Rev. Dr. Patrick Schultz, Pastor
Ann Rodewald, Organist
Jacob Grunwald, Reader

*"I am weak, but thou art strong; Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I'll be satisfied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee."*

Meditative Music

Bells Ring

Prelude Gathering for Worship:

Surely the Presence of the Lord

Call to Worship:

L: Listen, for the voice of God comes near!

P: Listen, for God's voice is not obtrusive.

L: We come to worship the God who became one of us,

P: Who calls us by name,

L: Who is Love Incarnate,

P: Who is!

L: Let us gather together in joy and hope -

P: Let us worship the God of Love!

Prayer:

Almighty God, you are holy and are enthroned upon our praises. In every time and place you have heard our cries; we have placed our trust in you, and we have never been disappointed. We rejoice in your holy Name and sing praises to your glory. We are here to worship you today. Come Holy Spirit Come!

Hymn:

St. James (#464)

St. Mark's (#354)

[Please Be Seated]

*Dwell In Me, O Blessed Spirit
Just As I Am*

Young at Heart:



Prayer of Confession:

Almighty God, you are holy and are enthroned upon our praises. You have given us the very breath of life; and imbued within us that which reflects the model of our creation. We are created in your image filled with joy and sadness, creativity and imagination, love and compassion, the ability to show mercy and grace and to forgive.

Forgive us when we seek to live apart from your help.

Forgive us the words that erupt from our mouths and is wounding to others.

Forgive us the hurtful thoughts we think when we feel you are hidden from us.

Forgive us when we seek to escape your embrace.

Free us to live in abundant life.

Thank God that we are forgiven, in Jesus' name!

Words of Assurance:

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God: who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,

our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God. *Amen*

Hymn:

St. James (#318)

St. Mark's (#136)

*Nearer My God to Thee
Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!*

Scripture Reading:

Job 23

Then Job answered and said:

*"Today also my complaint is bitter;
my hand is heavy on account of my groaning.
Oh, that I knew where I might find him,
that I might come even to his seat!
I would lay my case before him
and fill my mouth with arguments.
I would know what he would answer me
and understand what he would say to me.
Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?
No; he would pay attention to me.
There an upright man could argue with him,
and I would be acquitted forever by my judge.
"Behold, I go forward, but he is not there,
and backward, but I do not perceive him;
on the left hand when he is working, I do not behold him;
he turns to the right hand, but I do not see him.
But he knows the way that I take;
when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.
My foot has held fast to his steps;
I have kept his way and have not turned aside.
I have not departed from the commandment of his lips;
I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.
But he is unchangeable, and who can turn him back?
What he desires, that he does.
For he will complete what he appoints for me,
and many such things are in his mind.
Therefore I am terrified at his presence;
when I consider, I am in dread of him.
God has made my heart faint;
the Almighty has terrified me;
yet I am not silenced because of the darkness,
nor because thick darkness covers my face.*

Message:*Deserted***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:*Song of the Sabbath**~ The offering is brought to the altar ~*

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving:

God of every heartbeat: Your work touches all corners of creation; yet, when times are hard, we wonder if you've deserted us, and we become tight-fisted and fearful that sharing with others will leave us empty handed. As we bring these gifts to your altar, give us the eyes to see and the hearts to know that you never desert us and never send us away in need. In the name of your Son who came to remind us of your closeness and to give his life so that ours might be eternal. *Amen.*

People's Prayer ~ 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.*

Hymn:

St. James (#467)
St. Mark's (#716)

*I Love to Tell the Story
God Be With You Till We Meet Again*

Benediction:

The road is long. Let us walk it with integrity of heart - seeking God and scorning evil; loving good and loathing corruption; rendering justice and righting wrong. Let us walk confidently in the power of heaven, remembering one another constantly in our prayers and honoring one another continually with our lives.

Go now to love and serve the Lord in all that you do, all that you are, and all you will be building the kingdom of heaven here on earth as it is in heaven. *Amen.*

Postlude:

Postlude Marziale

**Typical
Sunday
Worship
times...**

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 meets 9-10am at both churches~

St. Mark's UCC

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

Staying Close, Staying Connected

Our Church Celebrations!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK TO:

*October 24th - Donald Hemb
25th - Brooklyn Vandoske
26th - Cindy Call, Bob Vandoske
27th - Wendy Henschel*

ANNIVERSARIES :

*October 22nd - Bill & Lori Roelse
23rd - Jim & Christine Hayon
24th - Todd & Jody Binversie
26th - Clarence & Heidi Belitz*

**NEXT WEEK SUNDAY---JOINT WORSHIP SERVICE AT ST. JAMES
at 10:00—followed by Congregational Meeting to discuss
Pastor's Salary & Benefits for 2024.
St. Mark's-NO Sunday School; St. James-Sunday School 9-10.**



OUR JOINT SMJ YOUTH, AS WELL AS ST. MARK'S SUNDAY SCHOOL, ARE COLLECTING ITEMS FOR OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD for girls & boys ages 5-9. This month we're collecting clothing and personal care items.
Ideas: comb or brush, toothpaste, washcloth, fun adhesive bandages, reusable eating utensils, nail clipper & file, clothing & undergarments, wristwatch or jewelry, flipflops/shoes, hats, sunglasses, bags/backpacks/purses, hair accessories, flashlight, cold weather items.



ST. MARK'S MEMBERS— more desserts & salads are needed for our Mission Fest dinner on November 12th. Sign up today in the church entryway.

HS YOUTH GROUP- Meets TODAY, Sunday, Oct. 22nd, at 5:30pm at St. James.

FALL STUDY GROUP – Monday, October 23rd, 10am/5pm at St. Mark's. Bring your Bible.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24TH. Email them to Karen at stmstjoffice@gmail.com

ST. JAMES ADULT CHOIR REHEARSAL – 6:30pm, Wednesday, October 25th

160th ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JAMES CHURCH- SPECIAL PROGRAM DURING THE 10:30 WORSHIP SERVICE ON SUNDAY, NOV. 5TH!



Sunday, November 12, 10:00 a.m.

Mission Fest

St. Mark's UCC

Ng286 Dairyland Drive, Cleveland

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*Featuring...*

*Lisa Key*

*from Emmaus Homes in St Louis*


~~~~~  
Dinner to Follow

Proceeds to be used to meet OCWM Goal

~~~~~  
\$15 - Adults --- \$5- ages 5-10  
Under 5 - Free

Ham ~~ Meat Balls ~~ Homemade Salads  
Parsley Butter Potatoes ~~ Rolls ~~ Corn  
Homemade Desserts



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](http://www.stmstjucc.org)

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

# GPS

**Grow** – deeper in our faith and relationship with God.

**Pray** – pray daily for family, neighbors, and others.

**Study** – read the Bible, pray over what we read, ask questions.

In Job 23 Job wonders (worries/tries to understand) his status with God. He is torn between an optimistic confidence (we see this in 6b-7, 10) and frustration with feeling parted from God as well as his own attempts of justifying himself before God (8-9). He is filled with planning his legal defense before the Lord (4-5) and affirming his righteousness (11-12). In other words, he feels like he is doing everything possible and really isn't to blame for this "desertion" by God. And both the suffering he has been enduring and his terror of God (13-17) remain.

Human beings tend to be motivated by self-interests: "What's in it for me?" we ask. We have adopted this sense of entitlement and self-fulfillment and our personal happiness as an end goal, but we nearly consider it to be a right. We are owed this by our status as children of God or Americans or privileged... We have subconsciously emended the Declaration of Independence to indicate what to us is indeed self-evident, that we have inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness). Subsequently, our relationship to God is a reflection of our ambition toward happiness and is premised on the anticipated benefits that accompany such expected rewards.

Job, on the other hand, is disinterested in his self-righteousness as a moral principle. His faith is above and beyond self-interest. If our righteousness is for righteousness's sake (a right relationship with God) what will that look like for us? How will that motivate or change our behaviors, choices, decisions? Can we use this as a lens to perceive what God expects of us and what we should expect of ourselves? How should we live if we want to pursue a faith not based on our self-interests? (Ref. Dr. John H. Walton NIV commentary on the book of Job.)

Dear God – help us to understand how Job's story intersects with our story and give us strength of conviction in being faithful to you. *Amen.*

# NOTES:

## **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."*