

The UCC and Sri Lanka

The Church of the American Ceylon Mission (CACM) has roots in the work of early missionaries in the Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka from 1813 onward. These were missionaries sent by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), the predecessor body of UCC mission that celebrates over 200 years of global mission, and a predecessor body of today's Global Ministries.

The early congregational church of the Jaffna peninsula joined the church union movement in 1947 and became the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Since 2006 the CACM has been separate from the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India (JDCSI). CACM maintains its long-standing partnership with Global Ministries.

CACM strives to provide educational, medical, and social services throughout Sri Lanka. They seek to provide educational opportunities to children and youth in impoverished communities to help them escape the cycle of poverty. They provide these services through early child care programs, after school programs, and vocational training, and special programs for children and youth. CACM also has a special project for the victims of civil war in the Wanni region.



January 25, 2026

St. John's United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 794, 401 N Main Street, Belvidere, IL 61008

Sunday Christian Education 9am Worship 10:30
 Office Hours: Tues – Thurs, 9am-Noon stjohns401.org
 (815)544-2977 stjohnsucc401@gmail.com

Pastor: Rev. Muriel Morley Jahn 815-544-2977
 murielmorley@gmail.com
 Pastoral Associate: Beth Carson 815-979-0473
 Minister of Music: Mary Albrecht 815-547-7503
 Choir Director: Jeanne Anderson 815-985-2652

WELCOME VISITORS! Thank you for coming! Please sign a pew card to place in the offering plate.

WORSHIP: When reading this bulletin Leader Speaks Plain Font, Everyone Speak Bold Font

Nursery: Children are welcome in all aspects of worship. The nursery provides an alternative space so kids and parents can both get what they need from worship. Children are encouraged to check in with their adult before going downstairs with the nursery attendant.

The Belvidere Group (AA) meets at everyday at 7pm.

Chair and Mat Yoga with Katherine Ray is going weekly! Chair yoga at 10 AM and mat yoga at 11:30 AM. No RSVP required and classes are \$5.



Delicious Fundraiser



Amazon List



T-Shirts

Prayer of Dedication– unison

O Way-Making God,

You are the source of every mercy and every new beginning, we give thanks for the gifts gathered here and for the hope you are stirring among us. As you lift burdens from weary shoulders and open paths we could not see before, shape these offerings into acts of healing, deeds of justice, and lives of shared joy.

Bless the giving and the givers, that generosity may widen your way and strengthen the communities we touch.

With gratitude for all you are doing in us and through us, we dedicate these gifts to the work of compassion you entrust to our care.

Amen.

Hymn #388– “Help Us Accept Each Other”

Benediction

Postlude

Announcement

Annual Meeting Sunday, February 1st after worship at 11:30am in person and on Zoom Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86560828256?pwd=JQgueAZGUdWXNIwxTLs4sEb51uHs> m.1 Meeting ID: 865 6082 8256 Passcode: 106479 Please read the report printed in the Narthex and emailed before you come.

Out of respect for Church Council, please, contact Moderator, Dawn Snow, 815- 558-9440 & da76isy@gmail.com at least 48 hours ahead if you have special questions or would like time to share during the meeting.

People who have walked under heavy burdens
have been met by the One who lifts them.
People who have carried what felt unshakeable
have felt the yoke break from their shoulders.
Into every place of strain or sorrow,
God's mercy draws near.
God's compassion reaches out.
God's grace opens a way forward.
In this promise, receive your freedom.
In this grace, begin again.
Amen.

Gloria Patri

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
and to the Holy Ghost,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall
be, world without end. Amen.**

Scripture

Matthew 4: 12-24

Sermon– “Puling Back the Curtain”**Moment for Mission**

Sri Lanka Mission

Musical Offering**Doxology**

**Praise God, through whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures
here
below,
Praise God, above ye heav-
enly host.
Praise Father, Son and Holy
Ghost. Amen.**



St. John's Calendar

Prelude**Announcements****Choral Introit– “Step by Step**

O God, you are my God, and I will ever praise you.
O God, you are my God, and I will ever praise you.
I will seek you in the morning,
and I will learn to walk in your ways . . .
and step by step you'll lead . . . me,
and I will follow you all of my days.

Responsive Welcome Statement

At St. John's United Church of Christ, we are Living
Outwardly & Valuing Everyone!

We live and work amid God's love!

In that spirit, we extend love to all who come into our
midst, regardless of sexual orientation, gender iden-
tity, race, nationality, skin color, culture, differing
abilities, age or political affiliations, to participate fully
in all aspects of church.

**Our ministry is to bring the Good News of
Christ's love to all.**

We work in God's name to tear down walls and build
community,
**to walk with each other through all of life's cir-
cumstances,**
to provide for those in need,
to offer comfort to the hurting and the sick,
and to uplift the brokenhearted.

Where we fail, we ask for God's forgiveness.

May the Holy Spirit and our siblings continue to chal-
lenge us to do better.

**No matter who you are or where you are on life's
journey, you are welcome here!**

Call to Worship– Responsively

Come, people of God—the dawn is breaking!
 A new day rises where sorrow had settled in.
The dawn is breaking—and we rise with it.
 Where burdens have bent us low, the Holy One
 draws near, steadyng our steps.
**The Holy One draws near—and we gather our
 courage.**
 Where yokes have weighed on shoulders and spirits,
 God is loosening what has held us down.
**What held us down is lifting—and we move
 toward freedom.**
 Come, all who yearn for justice; all who hope for
 healing; all who hunger for joy.
**We come to the dawning way, we come to the
 hopeful way, we come to the way God makes glo
 rious.**

Invocation

Holy One,
 Your light dawns where our shadows are deep
 est.
 Your are never far, your presence remains with
 us.
 Awaken us to the glimmers of your glory
 breaking into our world's weariness.
 Shine upon the paths we walk—paths obstructed
 by fear, uncertainty, and the heavy burdens our
 communities carry.
 Yet, your compassion rises like morning light!
 Reveal in us the places where liberation is al
 ready taking root.
 As you drew near to Galilee's borderlands,
 Draw near to us today.
 Let us behold your radiance in overlooked places
 and in one another.
 Make us ready, alert, and courageous—a people
 who move with your Spirit, who join your work of
 release, and who make glorious the way where
 your justice and joy can flourish.

Descend upon us, Spirit of the Living God.

Remain with us.

Awaken us.

**And guide our worship into the brightness of
 your new day.**

Amen.

Hymn #386— “The Church’s One Foundation”**Children’s Time****Pastoral Prayer – The Lord’s Prayer****Affirmation of Faith #886****Hymn #172— “Jesus Calls Us O’er the
 Tumult”****Prayer of Transformation and New Life**

Holy Companion of our difficult
 days, you call us toward what is
 when we feel worn or un certain.

We confess the weight we carry—worries we
 rehearse,
 the fears we nurture,
 the habits that hold us tight,
 patterns we cling to,
 the moments we turn from compassion,
 the truths we avoid.
 Unbind what tightens around our hearts.
 Lift what has grown too heavy.
 Make room in us for generosity, justice, and the
 courage to begin again.
 Shape us for your healing work as this new day
 unfolds.
 Amen.

Words of Grace

Hear the good news of the Gospel:



General Giving

new even

new even