

GODSPELL FOR LENT: Special Music Series



The Season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 17, with our Service of Ashes and Communion. Lent marks the beginning of our days of prayer and meditation on Jesus' life and ministry and how we take up the mission as inheritors of Christ's Way.

Lent opens our world up to new encounters of God's healing word for our spirits and world. This year, our Music Ministry Team is widening that wonder, performing selections each week from *Godspell*, Stephen Schwartz' modern parable of the life of Christ.

Based on the Gospel of Matthew, and voiced with ancient and modern hymns,

Godspell's unique expression has been interpreted many times to keep the story of Christ contemporary.

Led by our Music Ministry Team, musicians from our Sanctuary Choir, *Sounds of the Spirit*, Bell Choir, soloists, and instrumental groups we will encounter one of the songs from the musical, widening our spiritual journey.

Come hear the call to *Prepare Ye* for Lent. *Day by Day*, you will find different ways to pray and praise. For we have faith that *All Good Gifts* come from God our Creator!

The selections begin on Ash Wednesday, and continue every Sunday throughout Lent.



CREDO: Lenten Study Series Returns, with a Safe-Distancing Twist
Wednesdays 6:30-8:00, beginning 2/24

Lent gives us all an opportunity to get back to basics: to focus on the foundations of our faith and nurture those roots. This year's Lenten Series, *Credo*, will be an opportunity to do this together as a community. By revisiting the history of our Christian traditions, reexamining our own values and beliefs, we can come together and recommit to the work of Christian life.



ASH WEDNESDAY, 2/17
Ash Imposition, 7:30-9:00 am & 4:00-5:30 pm
Worship • 7 pm

Begin your Lenten Journey with the St. John UCC community. Ash imposition will be available in the morning at a safe-distance drive-through station, and again in the evening.

The day will conclude with a quiet, reflective service that will center us for the Lenten journey. We will celebrate Communion together as we prepare our hearts to build God's *Beautiful City*.



**Find Our
Extravagant
Welcome**

Come together and share in our streaming
Online Worship every Sunday, 10:00 am:
[facebook.com/stjohnuccfreeport/live](https://www.facebook.com/stjohnuccfreeport/live)

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY IN 2021



Credo is a Latin word meaning “I believe.” It is the first word of many of the ancient Christian creeds, including the Nicene Creed, Apostles’ Creed, and others. In contemporary English, a *credo* refers to a guiding belief or principle.

Credo is also the title of our Lenten series this year. Lent is always in some sense an opportunity to get back to basics, to focus on the foundations of our faith and nurture those roots. *Credo* will be an opportunity to do this as a community, by revisiting the history of our Christian traditions, reexamining our own values and beliefs, and recommitting to the work of Christian life.

Fittingly, as we explore these basics, we’ll also think back to our own experiences of confirmation or faith formation. How did we come to be Christians? Who taught us about what that meant? What is most important about those early experiences, and what have we learned since then?

The group will meet on Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:00 pm. You can participate in two ways:

- ***In-person at the church:*** Please call the church office by Monday of each week to let us know you will be present. This ensures we will have space and can comply with our safe-distancing requirements.
- ***Online via Zoom:***
Meeting ID: 815 235 2824
Password: 2636 (or AMEN!)

If you’re unfamiliar with Zoom, please let the church staff know. We can help you set it up or answer questions so that you can participate.

Each week, we’ll discuss topics related to some of the basic themes of Christian formation, as described by the resources we use for our own confirmands. No need to prepare anything or do reading in advance, just come ready to listen and to share!

2/24: A Journey in Faith: History & Heritage

The story of the Christian church tells us about how God works in human history. How has your faith been formed in your years in God’s creation?

3/3: God

The creation of the whole universe and humanity is the work of God, the Eternal Spirit. All that God creates is good. How are we created in that divine, good image?

3/10: Jesus Christ

God became one of us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Who is Jesus to you? Who is the Christ?

3/17: The Spirit

The Spirit creates, nurtures, and helps us use our gifts in tending creation. How does the Spirit move you?

3/24: The Church

The church works together as one body in Christ, with individual members sharing gifts and time and passion. Where is the church in your life and our community?

In addition to the Wednesday meetings, please watch our Facebook page for more information on ways to share stories about your own confirmation memories and experiences.

We hope this Lent can be a time of rebuilding and increasing connections within our community. *Credo* will be a place to exchange stories, explore ideas, and grow in Christian faith and discipleship together.

OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2/03 Max Lehman
 2/05 Mary Eder
 Andrea Schrock
 2/07 Pam Wessel
 2/11 Jack Fox
 2/14 Vicki MacAdam
 2/16 Alex Bertram,
 Shirley Durrstein

2/16 Janet Piefer
 Gary Wilson
 2/21 Logan Kuntz
 Joan Flynn
 2/23 Diane Heilman
 Patricia Schneiderman
 2/28 Jerald Watson

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

2/11 Ulan & Cindy Price
 2/25 Mike & Michelle Queckboerner

2/28 Ted & Joan Wootan



CHICAGO AVENUE MISSION & FOOD PANTRY

Our culinary master team continues to prepare weekly dinners for the guests at the Chicago Avenue Mission. The team serves a home-style meal every Wednesday. Your generous gift of time and love fills hungry people with food and friendship! We give thanks for Dan King's creative leadership and expansive menus! Interested in helping? Contact Pam Wessel or Dan King!

In supporting the Food Pantry: throughout February, we will be collecting **Canned Soup**.



Please call the Church office at 815-235-2824 to schedule a time to drop off donations.



**THANK YOU FOR
 YOUR GENEROUS SPIRIT
 AND STEWARDSHIP
 THROUGHOUT 2020!**

DECEMBER/ANNUAL

Income	Actual	Budget	Difference
Pledges/Gifts	\$33,155	\$22,083	\$11,072
Other Income	\$6,406	\$9,703	(-\$3,297)
Total Income	\$39,560	\$31,786	\$7,774
Total Expenses	\$35,904	\$34,153	\$1,751
Month Total	\$3,656	(-\$2,366)	\$6,023
YTD Income	\$374,725	\$380,800	(-\$6,075)
YTD Expenses	\$363,044	\$389,375	(-\$26,331)
YTD Total	\$11,681	(-\$8,575)	\$20,256

CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor:

Rev. Henry E. "Hank" Fairman
 Hank@stjohnuccfreeport.org

703-473-3534

Pastor for Community & Mission:

Rachel Kirk Rachel@stjohnuccfreeport.org
 352-215-7135

Director of Congregational Life

Pam Wessel Pam@stjohnuccfreeport.org
 815-275-7202

Administrative & Creative Assistant

Lisa Elsner Lisa@stjohnuccfreeport.org
 815-520-8701

Youth Ministry Assistant: Madison Riddell

Choir Director: Gina Bertram

Church Musicians: Randy Cook

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Donnley Dutcher



1010 South Park Boulevard
Freeport, IL 61032

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ONE MORE THOUGHT: DEVOTIONALS FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

“HAS GOD’S STEADFAST LOVE CEASED?”

Psalm 77:8

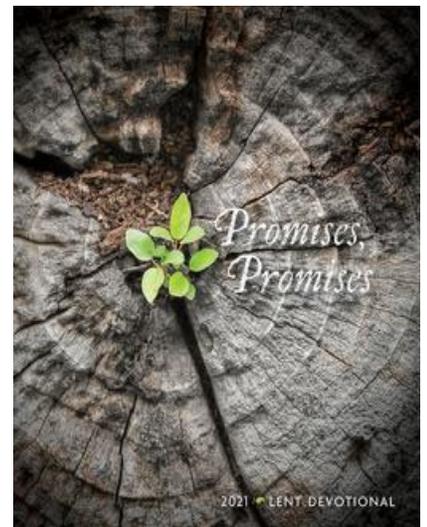
We know, we know. You've been burned before. Your trust has been bent to the limit, then snapped. Politicians. Lovers. Broadband providers. That very expensive eye cream. Western civilization. The church.

They promised so much -- and it hardly matters whether they simply tried and failed, or never intended to honor their promises in the first place.

They say God isn't like the ones who let you down. But it's hard not to look at God with the same jaded eye you've begun to cast on everything else. "Promises, promises," you sneer, and resume doom scrolling.

This Lent, bring your cynicism and your scars. But be sure you bring, too, that little bit of hope you still have for a God who won't let you down.

From the UCC Stillspeaking Writers group, *Promises* includes a biblical text, reflection, and prayer for each day of Lent until Easter Sunday.



Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 2/17/2021.

Pick up your copy today at the Church or call the office at 815-235-2824 to make arrangements for delivery.