

WELCOME TO WORSHIP TODAY!

We are delighted that you are here in celebration and worship at St. John UCC. The members and friends of our faith community hope that you will encounter God in a meaningful and profound way, and that God’s Spirit will inspire you today to live your faith out loud.

We hope that you want to discover more about the congregation and its ministry in the community of Freeport, across our state and nation, and around the world. Please ask one of our ushers or visit us:

- on the Web: www.stjohnuccfreeport.org
- on Facebook: www.facebook.com/stjohnuccfreeport

For our younger guests, Worship Enrichment “Busy Bags” are available in the Narthex. These are located at the counter outside of the Chapel Hearth Room. Check in with an usher to organize a bag!

Parents and guardians are also welcome to use Room S3, the Infant Room, to care for their families as needed. There is a television in the room to view the worship service in real time.

Assisted Listening Devices are located at the Sound Board in the back of the Sanctuary. Earpiece and “Induction Loops” for hearing aids are both available. Please ask an usher for assistance in their use.

Please remember to return your name tag on your way home. We will have them waiting for your return next week!

If you cannot join us in person, you will always have a front row seat on our live stream at facebook.com/stjohnuccfreeport/live.

Scan this code to access our Online Giving Portal:



We thank you for your continued generous support of St. John UCC.

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Faith Formation for All Ages

Our regular faith formation classes for youth take place during the worship hour at 10:00, following the *For the Child in All of Us*.

The Infant and Toddler Room is provided for ages birth to 3 years with age-appropriate activities and equipment in Room S3.

Godly Play welcomes youth Preschool to 3rd Grade for a play-based faith formation in Room S4.

Whirl welcomes youth 4th Grade to 8th Grade to learn Bible stories, ask questions, and explore their faith together in Room S8.

Adult Faith Formation welcomes high school youth and adults of all ages to gather in the Chapel Hearth Room from 9:00-9:45. This month’s theme is “Dreaming with a Generous Spirit.” Growing a culture of generosity in our congregation requires more than one person, or a small group. *Being faithful in our generosity takes each of us!*

- 11/16 Generously Dreaming on an Accounting of Time
- 11/23 Generously Dreaming on a Task List of Talents

Please join us in this spiritual adventure as we consider our call to be the church God needs us to be in Freeport and beyond.

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TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
November 16, 2025 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC

WELCOMING and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Prelude on “Samanthra”* Charles Callahan

*CALL TO WORSHIP Colin Ebbers

- One: The God of new beginnings,
All: begins with us here in this place.
- One: The God of re-creation,
All: re-creates dead-ends into new living.
- One: The God of dreams,
All: dreams in us a new world.
- One: The God of wholeness,
All: brings a new kind of harmony into this world.
- One: The God of vision,
All: envisions new possibilities in us.
- One: The God of love,
All: loves our lives and yet makes them new.
- One: Come, let us worship our wondrous God.

*HYMN *Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples* NOÉL
VU #507, on screen

** An asterisk is an invitation to rise as one is able (in body or spirit).
Please silence your mobile devices before the beginning of worship.*

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

GATHERING PRAYER

Silent Centering

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Dear God,
we want very much to be a community as a joy, and delight.
We desire for you to rejoice in our worship and for you to be
delighted in us as your children.

We can write words to capture our feelings,
and we can tell tales of the great things you have done,
but our words are not big enough to tell
of your extravagant love and inclusive welcome.

Call out to us in our daily agendas.
Text us when we need a reminder.
Message us daily, reminding us of the task to love our neighbors
as we do ourselves, and our earth as we would our own bodies.

Keep us mindful of the tasks needed to bring your realm of
peace with justice into the world each day.

Gather us into this time of worship,
so we might go out filled with praise for you. Amen.

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 65:17-25 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Jan Kunkle

Change for Change Mission Collection

This month’s collection will support: ***FSD 145 Shoe Fund***
and their work to provide winter-appropriate footwear to area youth.

The Prayer of our Savior

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread,
and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

ANTHEM

Celtic Prayer
The Bell Choir

Brubaker

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

2 Thessalonians 3:6-13 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

MESSAGE

Righteous Slackin’ Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

By Gracious Powers BONHOEFFER
WAR #75, vv. 1-4

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

Moment for Mission Annual Campaign 2025

Gathering the Gifts with Praise

Offering Song *Give Thanks* Smith, arr. Bettcher
Doxology (CH #48 lyrics, on screen) OLD 100TH

SHARING CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

Prayers of the People & Pastoral Prayer

*HYMN

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ LINSTEAD
WAR #698

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE

With Grateful Heart I Thank You, Lord GRATUS
WAR #720, v. 1

*POSTLUDE

Sent Forth by God’s Blessing arr. Michael Bedford

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL
an Open and Affirming, Racial Justice Congregation,
where God is Still Speaking

ANNOUNCEMENTS



ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2026
COMMITMENT SUNDAY, 11/23

For over 175 years, our church has changed lives. Marking our anniversary year with pride and purpose, we take on that commitment anew to be the church God calls us to be in Freeport and beyond. With thanksgiving, we make a connection between our discipleship and our sharing of resources offering our *Faith Promise* Cards for 2026 on Commitment Sunday, 11/23.

*Dream with us what God has yet for us
to share with our community!*



IMAGINATION TEAM
11/16, Following Worship

If you are interested in sharing your gifts of planning and hospitality with others, please join our event planning committee, the Imagination Team, on 11/16., following worship.



ADVENT BEGINS SUNDAY, 11/30

Advent’s light begins shining soon, showing us the way to hope, peace, love, and joy.

Look for more information mid-month in a special Advent TIDINGS!



twelve songs of Christmas

Musical Celebration, 12/7, 2:00pm

Does holiday music strike a chord with you? Come share in a gathering of instruments, choirs, and much more at the Third Annual “Twelve Songs of Christmas” Music Celebration! Our annual free-will offering for the *FSD 145 Shoe Fund* will be taken, providing winter-safe shoes to our community youth.



Wellness Ministry: Christmas Stockings

The Wellness Ministry Team will be assembling Christmas Stockings for our aging in place, senior living, and rehabilitation care community members.

If you would like to donate a few items, please place them into the basket in the narthex and drop them off no later than Sunday, 12/7. Thank you for spreading some Christmas spirit and brightening someone’s day!



Mitten Tree for Amity

From November to December, our congregation works with Amity’s Daycare, collecting mittens, hats, and gloves. Additionally, sweatshirts, sweatpants, sweaters, heavy socks, and boots are appreciated. Please place your donations on the Christmas tree in the entry way or in the baskets surrounding it.

THE CHURCH AT WORSHIP

507 Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples

1 To - day we all are called to be dis - ci - ples of the
 2 God made the world and at its birth or - dained our hu - man
 3 Pray jus - tice may come roll - ing down as in a might - y
 4 May we in ser - vice to our God act out the liv - ing

Lord, to help to set the cap - tive free, make
 race to live as stew - ards of the earth, re -
 stream, with righ - teous - ness in field and town to
 Word, and walk the road the saints have trod till

plough - share out of sword, to feed the hun - gry,
 spond - ing to God's grace. But we are vain and
 cleanse us and re - deem. For God is long - ing the
 all have seen and heard. As stew - ards of

quench their thirst, make love and peace our fast, to
 sad - ly proud, we sow not peace but strife, our
 to re - store an earth where con - flicts cease, a
 earth may we give thanks in one ac - cord to

serve the poor and home - less first, our ease and com - fort last.
 dis - cord spreads a dead - ly cloud that threat - ens all of life.
 world that was cre - at - ed for a har - mo - ny of peace.
 God who calls us all to be dis - ci - ples of the Lord.

Words: H. Kenn Carmichael 1985

Music: English traditional melody, arr. Arthur Seymour Sullivan 1874

Words copyright © 1985 H. Kenn Carmichael.

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'TIS THE SEASON ANNOUNCEMENTS



HANGING OF THE GREENS and FAMILY TREES

11/30, Following Worship

Advent's light begins shining on 11/30 with our annual Hanging of the Greens and decorating family Christmas trees! One of the great traditions of sharing our faith across the generations is our preparation for Advent and Christmas.

We will gather for a Soup and Salad luncheon and decorate the church for the season. All ages are warmly invited, with focused activities for our youngest friends.

You can also bring decorations from your home and share your family's style with the congregation by decorating a Christmas tree here at St. John UCC! If you are unable to decorate the tree yourself, volunteers will purchase and decorate for you for \$15. Every family who wants to decorate will have a tree waiting for them on 11/30! Please contact the church office by 11/23 to claim your tree!

*Trees can be decorated at the Hanging of the Greens on 11/30,
or can be scheduled at your family's convenience before 12/7.*



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

You are invited to "remember a loved one or honor a family member" by placing a poinsettia in our sanctuary at Christmas. We are offering 6" potted plants at \$20 each. Order forms are available in the Narthex or in the Office. Please return your form to the church office by 12/7.



ANNUAL HOLIDAY PIE SALE

Celebrate the holidays with our traditional pies! Cost is \$12 per pie. Apple, cherry, and pumpkin pie. Today is the last day to order. Pick up on Wednesday, 11/26, at 12:00 pm. Place your order on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.



CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE – BAKERS NEEDED!

Holiday sweets and treats will be available on Sunday, 12/7 after church, with proceeds supporting our congregation's mission and ministry. You can help make our Bake Sale a success! Bring cookies, muffins, breads, bars, pies, cupcakes, snack mix, or a sharing portion of your favorite holiday treats! Items can be delivered to church on 12/5 before 2:00 pm or 12/6 before 12:00 pm.

PEANUT BRITTLE MAKE-AND-TAKE PARTY

12/6, 8:30-12:00ISH

If you've always loved eating or gifting our "almost" world-famous peanut brittle and are curious how it's made, we have just the deal for you! Help make a bunch of batches on Saturday, 12/6, 8:30-12:00ish, ahead of the bake sale on 12/7. Absolutely no prior experience is required – it's easy! Measure ingredients, stir a pot! You will do great!

We will make as many batches as time allows.

Please let Lisa Ebbers know you'll be there!

THE UPDATED SHOPPING LIST

- ☐ 1 can of 18+ oz “Hearty” soup
– or –
2 cans 10+ oz “Condensed” soup
- ☐ 1 14 oz can of vegetables
- ☐ 1 28 oz can of Beans (not green)
- ☐ 1 12+ oz box of Breakfast Cereal
- ☐ 1 14 oz can of fruit
- ☐ 1 5 oz can of tuna / corned beef / chicken
- ☐ 1 16 oz jar of Peanut Butter
- ☐ 1 18 oz jar of Jelly
- ☐ 1 Small bag (1 lb) of White rice
- ☐ 1 24 oz jar Spaghetti Sauce
- ☐ 1 Box (1lb) of Spaghetti
- ☐ 1 15 oz Canned Pasta
- ☐ 1 4-unit pack of Easy Mac – or – 1 box of Mac & Cheese

If you are donating a pre-packed Pantry Bag, please follow this shopping list (no additions or substitutions, please!).



Use your smartphone to jump to:

<https://bit.ly/StJohnTithely>

Every \$30 means one more household is helped!

Why is this our mission? *Because God calls to us is to be the church, working to end hunger and homelessness in Freeport and beyond.*

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...”

Matthew 25:35



WEEKLY PANTRY BAG COLLECTION FOR FACC hosted by Mission & Outreach Team + HELIX Youth

Mission & Outreach Team and HELIX Youth Outreach are teaming up to help offset the increased demand on the FACC Kreeger Memorial Food Pantry. We need your help to provide the items needed for a “typical pantry bag” available to our community at the FACC Pantry. Beginning this week, we ask for your generous support providing funds to purchase or collecting those specific items to create at least ten (10) Pantry Bags every week.

*That’s our minimum goal: **Ten Pantry Bags every week.***

Help us meet, and exceed the goal!

Your help is needed to help address this critical mission to address food scarcity in our community.

- **Make a donation of \$30.** Every \$30 means one more bag! You can do this through our Tithe.ly link, or dropping of cash or check to the church office. That’s what one bag costs. And if your generous spirit is able to share more, please do!
- **Shop for supplies.** Take the list below to your favorite store. Purchase one of each item on the list (no additions or substitutions, please!), and drop off your full bag to the church by Wednesday, 12:00 pm.
- **Purchase a 10-item set of one product on the list.** Your purchase will be added to those donated by other members of our community, all working together to fill a bag. Drop off your full bag to the church by Wednesday, 12:00 pm. Many hands make light work!