

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

Adult Faith Formation will take a summer break in July and August. We hope that our new meeting time this year has fed you, body, mind, and spirit! Look for a wrap-up/planning survey in your email inbox soon!

Whirl welcomes youth Kindergarten to 5th Grade to learn Bible stories, ask questions, and explore their faith together in Room S8. This multi-age Summer Sunday School takes place during the 10:00 worship hour, following the Conversation with the Children.

Explore a Bible story together, enjoy the Sunday Funnies, and partner with kids of different ages for crafts and activities.

Youth in sixth grade and up are invited to sign up to be a Youth Helper for the class, serving as mentors to their younger peers. See the schedule on the bulletin board or contact Pastor Hank to sign up.

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

- Senior Pastor:
Rev. Henry E. “Hank” Fairman hank@stjohnuccfreeport.org
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- Digital Media Assistants: Max Gibson
- Church Musician: Randy Cook Bell and Choir Director: Coming Soon
- Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Donnley Dutcher

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SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
CHRISTMAS IN JULY
July 27, 2025 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen arr. C. Cole
Carl & Dianna Cole

*CALL TO WORSHIP Shawn Killingbeck

One: The people have walked in the shadows.
The light now shines.

All: Rejoice and sing a new song of great joy!

One: Nations war against nations and among themselves.
Yet, the light of peace, justice, and love
illuminates the path of the righteous remnant.

All: Rejoice and declare the glory of God
in the land of the living.

One: Creation groans with the strain
of use, misuse, and neglect.
Yet, the light of resilience
will not be dimmed on the earth.

All: Rejoice and witness the seas roar,
the land rest, and the wind breathe.
Rejoice for the glory comes and God is with us!

One: Let us come, faithful ones, and sing of God’s love
and embrace hope born anew!

*HYMN O Come, All Ye Faithful ADESTE FIDELES
(WAR #182)

* 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

CELEBRATION OF BIRTHDAYS AND GIFTS

GATHERING PRAYER

Silent Centering

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Emmanuel, you brought worlds into being. Your word goes out creating and dreaming your realm of justice. You enter into our human condition inviting us to follow in your way of peace.

The history of humanity reflects that we too often prefer our own way. We believe in the possibility of transformation and we ask you to point the way to new life in you. Remind us instead to follow the star that guides us to your light of joy.

Let a spirit of hope be born in us. Renew our minds that we might reflect your image more clearly and be drawn nearer to you. Make us a righteous branch in the vineyard.

Keep watch over your people assembled today as we lift our voices and our beings in praise, celebration, remembrance, and worship of you.

In the love of Jesus and hope of restoration, we pray. Amen.

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:2-7 NRSV, Updated Edition

CONVERSATION WITH THE CHILDREN Shawn Killingbeck

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

Hymn to Joy Ludwig van Beethoven
Carl & Dianna Cole arr. C. Cole

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1-7, 8-20 NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

In the Lush Mid-Summer Rev. Hank Fairman
(with apologies to Christina Rossetti)

*HYMN

Away in a Manger CRADLE SONG
(WAR #205)

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

Gathering the Gifts with Praise

Offering Song Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child Spiritual
arr. C. Cole

Doxology (CH #48 lyrics, on screen) OLD 100TH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

Praise Christ, all creatures here below!

Praise Holy Spirit, evermore!

One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen.

SHARING CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

*HYMN

Joy to the World! ANTIOCH
(NCH #132, on screen)

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE

Sing a New Church Into Being NETTLETON
(WAR #577, v. 4)

*POSTLUDE

Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child (reprise) Spiritual
arr. C. Cole

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

an Open and Affirming, Racial Justice Congregation,
where God is Still Speaking,

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CHRISTMAS IN JULY and NO BAKE BAKE SALE

Our Mid-Summer Stewardship Drive will have us dreaming of tinsel all July long!

This year, our *Christmas in July* campaign is an imaginative, fun, and tasty “No Bake Bake Sale.” Consider what the cost of ingredients, time, and utilities would be to make your favorite holiday treat. Or consider what God is calling us to do and be in our ministry right now, and what support we need to be “*That Church*” for Freeport. Contribute that amount in support of our congregation’s mission all year long!

Our goal with this campaign is to match our December 2024 offerings - \$22,000!



AMITY UNDERWEAR DRIVE

There is a great need for new children’s underwear for underprivileged households in our community. We are called to reach out and let them know that we care. A laundry basket can be found in the Atrium for your donations of sizes 8-18 underwear of all types.

Please send in your donation by 8/1.



WELLNESS MINISTRY: GRIEF GROUP SUMMER PICNIC
8/27, 11:00am - 1:00pm

Join the St. John UCC Wellness Ministry Team’s Grief Group for a Summer Picnic on Wednesday, 8/27. This gathering will be a time of sharing and nurturing for those experiencing grief as well as those who wish to show their support. You are welcome to bring and share your favorite summer comfort food.

Joy to the World!

132

Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 98:4-9; Luke 2:11-15

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth its
2 Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 Christ rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

prais - es bring; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Christ room,
songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
na - tions prove The glo - ries of God's righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
and won - ders of God's love, and won - ders of God's

and re - peat the sound-ing joy, and
and won - ders of God's love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound-ing joy.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of God's love.

heaven and na - ture sing,
peat the sound-ing joy,
won - ders of God's love,

Stanza 1 may be sung, "Joy to the world! the Sovereign comes: . . ."

Isaac Watts, an English Congregationalist, freely paraphrased Old Testament psalms to glorify Christ and here develops a hymn of advent and nativity from a psalm.

Tune: ANTIOCH C.M.
Lowell Mason, 1836

ANNOUNCEMENTS



ICE CREAM SOCIAL

8/13, 4:30-7:00 pm

Come enjoy an evening of fun, food and relaxation with friends from the St. John UCC community. Barbecue sandwiches, hot dogs, chips, pasta salad and drink will be served, along with cake, pie and ice cream to complete your meal! Tickets are available in the church office or on Sundays.

**\$7 for BBQ or Hot Dog,
with Chips, Pasta Salad, and Drink**

\$5 for Pie or Cake, Ice Cream, and Drink

If you are able to donate a pie or cake, or willing to volunteer your time to serve as cashier, server, kitchen crew, or cleanup crew, please sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Thank you for your help!



COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Kampmeier Fund in the St. John Church Endowment was created to extend the generous spirit of our members and friends for educational scholarships. Members of our church community with acceptance to college are invited to apply.

Applications are available from the church office, or by emailing pam@stjohnuccfreeport.org.

Deadline for Applications is Sunday, August 10th.