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 *Moment for All Ages*.

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 meetings are on Sunday mornings, from 9:00-9:45. This month, we'll seek the Spirit's wisdom on this question: *What does it mean to be a generous steward, investing in the mission of today's church?*

We will take time to consider the personal and spiritual side of our commitment that leads us to support a congregation like ours. Inspired by the resources curated at The Salt Project, we'll talk about things like:

11/8 *Gratitude:*
Expressing our Gratitude (without our wallet)

11/15 *Amazing Grace:* Shifting our lens from "What we need, but don't have." to "What we do have and what is possible."

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

Senior Pastor:
Rev. Henry E. "Hank" Fairman — hank@stjohnuccfreeport.org, mobile: 703-473-3534

Visitation Pastor:
Rev. Ted Michalsen — ted@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Director of Congregational Life:
Pam Wessel — pam@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Creative & Administrative Assistant:
Myles Halberstadt — myles@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Digital Media Assistants: Max Gibson, Elliot Fairman

Music Director: Britney Kieselhorst — britney@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Church Musician: Randy Cook

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. Donnley Dutcher

1010 South Park Boulevard Freeport, IL 61032
815.235.2824 • www.stjohnuccfreeport.org

ST JOHN
United Church of Christ
Freeport, Illinois

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
November 8, 2026 ● 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Sonatina in C* arr. Martha Lynn Thompson
The Bell Choir

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Myles Halberstadt

One: Let us gather within the covenant of Love,
All: Which connects us to God and to one another.
One: Let us gather to remember promises –
All: God's promises to us and ours to God.
One: Let us gather to remember the signs of God's love—
All: The sacraments of communion and baptism
the gift of sacred stories,
the symbols of cross and candle.
One: God's word inspires us and sustains us.
God's word challenges and provokes us.
God's word renews and heals us.
All: As renewal, as restoration, as response and as challenge. May we build communities of generosity, justice, and heart.
One: Let us gather to worship God.

***HYMN** *We Are God's People* SYMPHONY
WAR #547

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

** 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.

GATHERING PRAYER

Silent Centering

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Holy God, we are always seeking your guidance on our journey.
We would like it if everything was spelled out clearly,
so that we knew what to expect.

We confess that when times are tight,
when the stock market is unstable and inflation is high,
we are tempted to hide our money and diminish our gifts.

But that's not the way life works.

You remind us that faith is an ongoing process,
born in covenantal relationship with you.

Help us to set aside our fears and to trust
that when we invest in healing creation,
blessings return to us in ways we cannot conceive of –
big and small. Open our hearts today
and remind us of your love for us
through all generations, Amen

CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

Weston Hayes Priewe
child of Tommy and Kristen Priewe

Congregational Welcome

One: Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to the ones about to be baptized, as they live and grow in Christ?

All: We promise our love, support, and care.

Baptism Song *Child of Blessing, Child of Promise* STUTTGART

NCH #325, vv. 1, 3

Child of blessing, child of promise,
baptized with the Spirit's sign,
with this water God has sealed you
unto love and grace divine.

Child of joy, our dearest treasure,
God's you are; from God you came.
Back to God we humbly give you:
live as one who bears Christ's name.

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Deuteronomy 6:1-9 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

A MOMENT FOR ALL AGES

Jan Kunkle

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

Now Thank We All Our God arr. Frances Callahan
The Bell Choir

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:1-13 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

MESSAGE

"God's Realm Will Be Like This" Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

Church is More than Just a Building NETTLETON

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PRESENTING OUR HEARTS +AND GIFTS TO GOD

Generosity Moment: Annual Giving Campaign

Gathering the Gifts with Praise

One: Jesus said, "I was hungry, and you gave me food.
All: "I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink.
One: "I was a stranger and you welcomed me,
All: "I was naked and you gave me clothing,
One: "I was sick and you took care of me,
All: "I was in prison and you visited me."
One: When did I do this?
All: "Inasmuch as you did to the least of these, my family and neighbors, you did it to me."
One: Let all you do be done in love.

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

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

Offering Song *Christ, Be Our Light!*

B. Farrell, arr. M. Hayes

Doxology (CH #48) 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 *Lord, You Give the Great Commission* ABBOT'S LEIGH

WAR #592

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE *Rise Up, O Saints of God!* FESTAL SONG

WAR #590, v. 2

*POSTLUDE *Proclamation on "Wachet Auf"* Aaron David Miller

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BUDGET GOALS MEETING
WITH POTATO BAR LUNCH
Today, 11:30 am

The Church Council welcomes our community to gather and learn about "the bottom line" of our congregation's finances, mission, and vision for the coming year. We will sit down for a community meal, review last year's generosity, and dream together all that God is calling us to do and be in 2027 through our ministry in Freeport and beyond.

Church is More than Just a Building

NETTLETON (8.7.8.7 D)



Words by Amada Udis-Kessler, alt., Music by Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, 1813

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



HOLIDAY PIES

Celebrate the holidays with our traditional pies! The cost is $15 per pies. Apple, cherry, and pumpkin pie orders will be taken from 11/1 until 11/15 with pick up on Wednesday, 11/25, at 12:00 pm. Place your order on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board or by calling the church office.

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. Some suggested donations might be candies, mints, crackers, pens, lotions, ChapStick, or other small Christmas gifts.

Please drop off your donation no later than Sunday, 12/6. 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.