

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, exploring different topics and formats weekly.

During Lent, we will be using Kate Bowler's *Bless The Lent We Actually Have* as our guide. Come join us as we walk through Lent's long road together.

2/22 *Blessed Are the Imperfect*

3/1 *Blessed are the Curious*

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

mobile: 440-536-1044

Director of Congregational Life:

Pam Wessel

pam@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Creative & Administrative Assistant:

Karla Hardersen

karla@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Digital Media Assistant: Max Gibson

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



TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY

February 15, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain* arr. M. Burkhardt

*CALL TO WORSHIP Christina Fairman

One: The light of God can be seen in the strangest of places if you look at it right.

All: We have seen that light in the manger crib and in the glittering robe that is worn on the mountain.

One: We have seen the light of God;

All: in life's moments of lightheadedness and in the light that creates the shadows of the darkest valley.

One: We have seen the light of God;

All: In the places where hope blossoms from the cracks. At the intersection of old life ending and new life being born.

One: In that light, let us come and worship.

*HYMN *Holy God, We Praise Your Name* GROSSER GOTT

WAR #138

*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)

God, you call us to the top of the mountain a place where earth meets the heavens.

Here your light shines brilliantly.

When our eyes adjust, we see Peter's booths.

The wattage of your light exposes the faults in our best laid plans.

Forgive us for our faults and allow us to see you in all your dazzling glory.

Allow these mountain top moments to linger in our memories so that we are inspired when the life we live in the shadow of the mountain grows difficult. Amen

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Exodus 24:12-18

NRSV, Updated Edition

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Change for Change Mission Collection

This month's collection will support:

Summer Camp Scholarships for children and youth attending Outdoor Ministries Programs in the Illinois Conference UCC

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

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round

The Chancel Choir

arr. J. David Moore

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 17:1-9

NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

More than Meets the Eye

Rev. Ted Michalsen

*HYMN

Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain

UNSER HERRSCHER

GTG #193, see insert

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

Gathering the Gifts with Praise

Offering Song *Jesus on the Mountain Peak*

B. Wren/C. Taylor

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

Abide with Me

EVENTIDE

WAR #521

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE

Go Now in Peace

TALLIS' CANON

WAR #717, v. 1

*POSTLUDE

Festal Postlude on "Ratisbon"

R. Groom te Velde

ANNOUNCEMENTS



PREPARING FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY:

Ash Wednesday, 2/18, 6:00 pm

Begin your Lenten Journey with the St. John UCC community on Ash Wednesday, 2/18. A community meal, provided by our Care and Community Leadership Team, will be held at 6:00 pm. Ash Wednesday worship will begin at 7:00 pm. We will celebrate Communion and the Imposition of Ashes as we prepare our hearts for this season of reflection and community.

Please sign up in the Narthex and let us know you'll be attending the community meal.



LENT FORMATION AND DISCUSSION SERIES

Sundays & Wednesdays, beginning 2/22

On Sundays during Adult Formation from 9-9:45 am, gather in weekly sessions, using Kate Bowler's *Bless The Lent We Actually Have* as our guide.

On Wednesdays, gather for supper at 6:00 pm, and continue or join up at 6:30 with Pastor Hank for a wider view of our Lenten focus, A Sanctified Art's *Tell me something good: Grounded in the good news this Lent*.

The accompanying study guides for each session are available in the Narthex. These can also be used for your personal devotions!



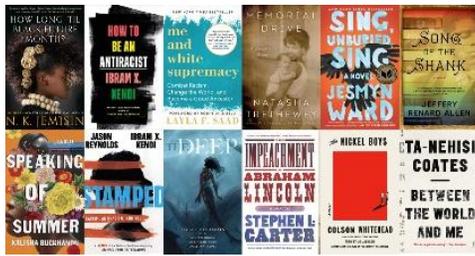
Leadership Retreat

2/21, 8:30 AM-12:00 AM

The Church Council, Leadership Teams, and Task Groups will meet for the annual leadership retreat with the joyful task for the day: *seeking where God is calling us to serve in 2026 and beyond.*

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

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



BLACK HISTORY MONTH: RACIAL JUSTICE COLLECTION

There is so much to learn about the impact of African Americans on the history of our city, state, nation and world. Let's commit today to do our work to confront racism and learn a new story in our history.

We've curated a list of books to add to our church's library collection to expand our knowledge and witness of the African American experience. They were chosen for a variety of expressions, a mix of literature types, and a wide accessibility for the many ages in our congregation.

Help grow the Racial Justice Collection in the Uthlaut Memorial Library at St. John UCC in celebration and honor of Black History Month 2026 by donating a book from our wish list.

Scan this code to access our Amazon wish list for books to add to our library, or visit the link below the picture:



<https://bit.ly/2026BlackHistoryMonthLibrary>

193 Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain

1 Je - sus, take us to the moun - tain, where, with Pe - ter,
 2 What do you want us to see there, that your close com -
 3 What do you want us to hear there, that your dear dis -
 4 Take us to that oth - er moun - tain where we see you
 5 We who have be - held your glo - ry, ris - en and as -

James, and John, we are daz - zled by your glo - ry,
 pan - ions saw? Your di - vin - i - ty re - vealed there
 ci - ples heard? Once a - gain the voice from heav - en
 glo - ri - fied, where you shout - ed "It is fin - ished!"
 cend - ed Lord, can - not help but tell the sto - ry,

light as blind - ing as the sun. There pre - pare us
 fills us with the self - same awe. Clothed in flesh like
 says of the In - car - nate Word, "Lis - ten, lis - ten,
 where for all the world you died. Hear the stunned cen -
 all that we have seen and heard; say with Pe - ter,

for the night by the vi - sion of that sight.
 ours you go, matched to meet our dead - liest foe.
 ev - ery - one: this is my be - lov - ed Son."
 tur - i - on: "Tru - ly this was God's own Son!"
 James, and John: "You are God's be - lov - ed Son!"

Some version of the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9/Mark 9:2-9/Luke 9:28-36) is always read on the last Sunday after the Epiphany. In this text that foretaste of Christ's glorification helps to prepare Peter, James, and John for their roles as proclaimers of "God's beloved Son."

ANNOUNCEMENTS



The St. John UCC Time and Talent Survey helps the Leadership Teams know what God is calling us to be and do in our mission, and what ministries you feel called to share. Please take a moment to fill out a survey (available in the Narthex or online) and return to the office.

Thank you for your sharing in our mission and ministry!



CLIMATE CHANGE SPEAKER SERIES 2/18, 6:30 PM

Mark your calendars! The Green Team invites you to attend the second lecture in the “Cost of Living With Climate Change” series on Wednesday, 2/18, at 6:30 pm at the Freeport Public Library.



Rebuilding Together Stephenson County welcomes everyone to their “Annual-ish Meeting” and Volunteer Night, 2/26 at 5:00 pm in St. John UCC’s Chapel Hearth Room. Yes, snacks will be had, and BIG EXITING NEWS for this April’s National Rebuilding Month will be shared! See you there, Rebuilders!



SAFE CHURCH/SAFE CONDUCT TRAINING Sunday, 3/1, 11:30-2:00 PM

Church members who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults and church leadership should attend a Safe Church/Safe Conduct Training every three years to review our policies for protecting people in our care. Lunch is provided.

Please RSVP for the training by Sunday, 2/22, and include special dietary restrictions or food allergies, and accessibility needs to:

safechurch@stjohnuccfreeport.org



a contest of musical proportions!

Through the end of February, we will be doing a survey, gathering our favorite hymns and songs to sing in worship.

What hymns do you love singing? What songs do you wish we would add? What hymns connect you to God’s presence? What songs to you find yourself humming during the week in prayer?

Fill out a March Hymn Madness Survey (available in the Narthex) and place it in the nearby box.

All of the hymns and songs submitted will be tallied up and placed into a NCAA single-elimination tournament *March Madness* - style bracket.