

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](https://www.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.

This month we'll be discussing the Our Whole Lives (OWL) program.

2/8: Exploring Personal Values

2/15 Our Whole Lives at St. John UCC

For these two weeks, high school youth are unable to participate in the adult faith formation offering. High School youth will be able to rejoin the 9:00 am formation hour on 2/22.

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FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY &
RACIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

February 8, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Partita on "Gather Us In"

Marty Haugen

arr. Rebecca Groom te Velde

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Lisa Schubert

One: Beautiful are the works of God!

All: Beautiful also are the skins of God's people!

One: Beautiful is the mind of God!

All: Beautiful also are the hopes of God's people!

One: Beautiful is the heart of God!

All: Beautiful also are the souls of God's people!

One: Beautiful it is when God's people
come together in the hues and colors of creation.

**All: And when we do, we come together in peace,
with justice for all people, singing:**

"God be the glory for the things God has done."

*HYMN

All People That on Earth Do Dwell OLD HUNDREDTH

NCH #7, see insert

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

GATHERING PRAYER

** 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.*

Silent Centering

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

O God,

You created us in divine likeness, diverse and beautiful:

In every person, every race is your image.

But history's eyes tell us that we have too often failed to recognize your image in all: Forgive us.

You created us in divine freedom, to be free:

In every decision, every choice is your possibility of justice.

But too often we fail to choose to advocate for your justice for all: Forgive us.

You created us for divine abundance, to tend and share:

In every garden, every part of our city, our nation, this world is your seed of community.

But too often we fail to create that community inclusive of all, and gives to all equal access to your abundant life: Forgive us.

On this Racial Justice Sunday, we confess that the sin of Christian Nationalism, White Supremacy, and racial prejudice distorts your divine plan for our human lives: Forgive us.

Open our eyes to distinguish good from evil;

Open our hearts to desire good over evil;

Strengthen our wills to choose good beyond evil;

So that we may help bring your beloved community into our place, into our time, and into our lives.

In one voice, we sing: Amen.

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 58:1-12

NRSV, Updated Edition

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Anita Bicksler

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

Dream God's Dream

Bryan Sirchio

Shawn Killingbeck, Hugh Knapp, Randy Cook

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 5:13-20

NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

Words that Oppress, Words that Free Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

As a Fire Is Meant for Burning

BEACH SPRING

WAR #55I

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

Gathering the Gifts with Praise

Offering Song *How Can We Be Silent*

Michael Mahler

arr. Paul Tate

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

A Litany for a Multiracial/Multicultural Inclusive Community

(insert)

*HYMN

You Are Salt for the Earth, O People

BRING FORTH

NCH #181, see insert

*BENEDICTION

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

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

*RESPONSE

Go Now in Peace

TALLIS' CANON

WAR #717, v. I

*POSTLUDE

Go Make a Difference

Angrisano/Tomaszek

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!

Litany for a Multiracial/Multicultural Inclusive Community

One: God of Light, God of Change,
you fashion each of us in your image,
reflecting the presence of your Spirit and
fullness of your grace.

All: Light of God, transfigure us that we may live as one.

One: You invite us into right relationship with you.
You invite us to love you whom we have not seen.
We are one in you O God, who created us all.

All: Light of God, transfigure us that we may mirror you.

One: Yet too often we choose to see others as less than ourselves
because of the color of their skin.
We are all sisters and brothers, walking in the light of your love.
Help us to love our neighbors even more than we love ourselves.

All: Light of God, transfigure us that we may love each other.

One: Your Spirit dwells among us, giving us all freedom.
Yet too often we succumb to the sin of racism.
We look around the world and witness
the economic injustices facing people of color.

All: Light of God, transfigure us that we may be vessels of freedom.

One: Forgive us for attitudes of superiority which result in oppression.
Forgive us for daring to think we are better than others.
Challenge us to see your face reflected in each face,
of every hue and color, of every nation of every continent.
Challenge us to live your commandment to love each other.

All: Light of God, transfigure us that we may reflect your truth.

One: Provide us with the courage to care, the wisdom to speak out,
the vision to imagine a new relationship, and the passion to stand up
and be heard in our protests and cries for freedom.

All: Light of God, transfigure us that we may be agents of growth.

One: Open our hearts and lives to your transforming light.
Open our mouths to speak the truth on behalf of people of color who
continue to be marginalized by the many facets of racism.

All: Light of God, transfigure us from one degree of glory to another.

One: God of Light, God of Change
open our hearts and minds
to embrace equality and justice for all people around the world.

**All: Light of God, transfigure us!
There is yet more of your light and truth
to break forth from among us.
Let it break forth, and let it begin with me! Amen.**



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.*



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

All People That on Earth Do Dwell

William Kethe, 1561
Adapt. Thomas H. Troeger, 1992

Ps. 100

1 All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, sing
 2 Know that there is one God, in - deed, who
 3 En - ter the sa - cred gates with praise, with
 4 Pro - claim a - gain that God is good, whose

out your faith with cheer - ful voice; De - light in God whose
 fash - ions us with - out our aid, Who claims us, gives us
 joy ap - proach the tem - ple walls. Ex - tol and bless our
 mer - cy is for - ev - er sure, Whose truth at all times

praise you tell, whose pres-ence calls you to re - joice.
 all we need, whose ten - der care will nev - er fade.
 God al - ways as peo - ple whom the Spir - it calls.
 firm - ly stood, and shall from age to age en - dure.

Old Hundredth is perhaps the best known and most widely used of all psalm tunes. It came into English use in 1561 with Kethe's paraphrase of Psalm 100 and has been associated with it ever since.

*Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH L.M.
 Attrib. to Louis Bourgeois (c. 1510–c. 1561)
 Trente quatre Pseaumes, Geneva, 1551*

You Are Salt for the Earth, O People

181

Paraphr. by Marty Haugen, 1986; alt.

Matt. 5:13-15

Unison
D (allow to ring off) G D/F# A7 D

1 You are salt for the earth, O peo-ple: salt for the reign of God!
2 You are a light on the hill, O peo-ple: light for the Cit-y of God!
3 You are a seed of the Word, O peo-ple: bring forth the reign of God!
4 We are a blessed and a pil-grim peo-ple: bound for the reign of God!

G D/F# A7 D G D A7 D

Share the fla-vor of life, O peo-ple: life in the Cit-y of God!
Shine so ho-ly and bright, O peo-ple: shine for the Cit-y of God!
Seeds of mer-cy and seeds of jus-tice, grow in the Cit-y of God!
Love our jour-ney and love our home-land: love is the Cit-y of God!

Refrain
G D/F# A7 D G D/F# A7 D

Bring forth the reign of mer-cy, bring forth the reign of peace;

G D/F# A7 D G D/F# A7 D

Bring forth the reign of jus-tice, bring forth the Cit-y of God!

During a residency at Holden Village, a retreat center in the state of Washington, Marty Haugen wrote this hymn to be used as a "processing song" for outdoor worship. The lectionary readings focusing on Jesus' teaching about the "reign of God" provided the basis for the text.

Tune: BRING FORTH Irr. with refrain
Marty Haugen, 1986

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. The featured speaker is Dr. John (Jack) Herrmann, retired local veterinarian, Professor Emeritus from the Center for One Health and School of Public Health at the U of I. Dr. Herrmann has served on the IL State Board of Health for the past 12 years and will speak on the health impacts of climate change. Refreshments will be provided.