

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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Palm Sunday Was a Protest
Nicolette Faison
12"x24" Acrylic, marker, paper on canvas

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PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

the good news is...inspiring us to act

March 29, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna* arr. Robert J. Powell

*CALL TO WORSHIP Shawn Killingbeck

One: Will you follow?
Will you lay down your coat?
Will you lay down something important?

All: Will you shout "Hosanna"?
Will you join the parade
Will you sing, even if your throat is hoarse?

One: Will you cut down a palm branch?
Will you wave it in the air?
Will you follow the one riding on a donkey?
Will you let this good news inspire you to act?

All: We will. We will sing.
We will pay close attention.
We will worship. We will follow.

One: Hosanna in the highest!

All: Hosanna in the highest!

*HYMN *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna* ELLACOMBE

WAR #267

*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.

CELEBRATION OF BIRTHDAYS AND GIFTS

GATHERING PRAYER

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Jesus of Nazareth,
we know that you spent your days teaching and healing.
You marched through the streets and walked on water.
You laid hands on the sick and broke bread at crowded dinner tables.
Your good news was not confined to conversation.
It was not confined to the Temple.
Your good news was an act of love, alive in the world.
Holy God, we long for a faith like that.
Open us from the times when we confine our faith
to something we think about,
as opposed to something we act upon.
Inspire us to love as you loved.
Inspire us to act.
With hope for tomorrow we pray.
Root us in mercy, justice, and love. Amen.

Words of Affirmation

One: Cheering, Chanting, Dizzy crowd,
whether or not you wave your palm branch,
whether or not you live your faith out loud,
whether or not you allow this good news to inspire your actions,
God will never stop loving you.
**All: Jesus will never stop marching for you.
The Spirit will never stop listening to you.
God has claimed, loved, and held us in that grace.
What good, good news. Amen!**

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Mark 11:1-11

NRSV, Updated Edition

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Tim Ebbbers

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

Hosanna to the Living Lord Van Denman Thompson
The Chancel Choir

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

John 12:1-11

NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

Marking Time

Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

We Long to Know Peace! LYONS 10.10.11.11
Words: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, © 2026, on screen

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

Gathering the Gifts with Praise

One: This is some good news:
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.

Offering Song *The King of Glory* arr. Michael Burkhardt

Doxology (CH #48 lyrics) 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 *Ride On! Ride On in Majesty* ST. DROSDANE
NCH #215, on screen

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE *From Gray Until Golden* ST. DENIO
on screen

*POSTLUDE *Ride On!* arr. Matthew H. Corl



FREEPORT BUNNY TRAIL: 4/4, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

The Care & Community Team needs your help! The Freeport Park District is putting on their annual Bunny Trail on 4/4 from 11:00 am-1:00 pm at Krape Park. We need volunteers and candy donations to serve to the more than 600 youth that attend annually. All donations can be brought to the church office. Please let Pam know if you are able to help. Everybunny is welcome!

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



During April, help HELIX collect personal care supplies for youth in need! Donations will stock the Community Care Cupboard on West Eby Street (next to Jones Farrar IB World School), for youth to take throughout the year as needed.

The items needed are below (**Travel sizes, please!**):

Bar & Body Wash
Shampoo & Conditioner
Hand or Body Lotion
Lip Balm

Deodorant
Tampons & Pads
Face Wash
Toothbrush & Toothpaste

Please note: This collection will stock the Cupboard for about two months. *There is a HIGH level of need right now.*

Follow this link to our Amazon wishlist:



<https://bit.ly/HELIXCareCupboard>



Adult Faith Formation Series 4/12-5/7

Come and join the Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation group during Mental Health Awareness Month. An arrangement of facilitators will offer education on topics of mental health. Each week we will learn a little more as we contemplate if God is calling St. John UCC to partner with the UCC Mental Health Network by becoming a WISE congregation (welcoming, inclusive, supportive, engaged).

Please join us during Mental Health Awareness Month as we learn how to be welcoming, supportive, inclusive, and engaged in the work of mental health care and be present in the lives of those who are seeking treatment.

4/12 Introduction to Mental Health
Eradicating the stigma

4/19 Mental Health in Freeport
What mental Health services exist in our community



HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SUNDAY

March 29 Palm Sunday

the good news is...inspiring us to act

Mark 11:1-11: Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem

Our Holy Week journey to Christ's Resurrection begins with a day of worship and palm waving. Sing "Hosanna!" in morning worship (including the annual *Palm Parade!*).

April 2 Maundy Thursday Tenebrae, 7:00 pm

the good news is...Even Judas gets his feet washed

John 2:1-11: The wedding at Cana

Celebrate Communion as we remember the Last Supper, pray with Christ in the Garden, and mourn with his followers at the cross. Worship will include the Tenebrae, a service of shadows marking the story of Holy Week.

April 5 Easter / Resurrection Sunday

the good news is...alive in the world

Matthew 28:1-10: "Do not be afraid..."

6:00 am – Sunrise Service, with Communion

The Sunrise Service will take place on the church lawn (weather permitting).

10:00 am – Celebration Service, with Communion

Christ is Risen! Shout Hosanna! Celebrate this day of days with the congregation. Come share in the transformation of Good Friday to Easter, grief to new life!

FREERPORT PRIDE

2026 FREERPORT PRIDE PLANNING MEETING 4/12, Following Worship

There will be a meeting after worship on Sunday, 4/12, to start the planning process for the 2026 Freeport Pride Picnic on 6/13. Anyone who would like to join the planning team is welcome to attend. If you're interested in getting involved but can't make it to the meeting, please email Liz at lizzybeth123@gmail.com.



CLIMATE CHANGE SPEAKER SERIES 4/8, 6:30 PM

Don't miss another opportunity to learn about "The Cost of Living With Climate Change." The Green Team invites you attend the next lecture on Wednesday, April 8, at 6:30 pm at the Freeport Public Library. The featured speaker will be Jennifer Walling, Executive Director of the Illinois Environmental Council, who will present information on state and local policies that affect climate change. Refreshments will be provided.

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

"We Long to Know Peace!"

1. "We long to know peace!" Jer - u - sa - lem said
 2. "Ho - san - na! God saves!" they cried to the Lord.
 3. "He is - n't our king!" the crowd quick - ly turned,
 4. "We long to know peace!" O God, we still say,

as Cae - sar's great troops filled peo - ple with dread,
 They called him a king and looked for his sword.
 re - ject - ing the gift for which they had yearned.
 yet when Je - sus calls we turn him a - way.

As sol - diers and ar - mies marched in with great might,
 Would he fight their bat - tles and turn things a - round?
 They mocked him and killed him, yet death did not win.
 O God, may we see in this non - vio - lent king

no jus - tice was found and no peace was in sight.
 Then Christ rode a crea - ture of peace in - to town.
 Christ rose from the dead and brought God's peace a - gain.
 the peace that you of - fer, the life that you bring.

Biblical References: Luke 19:38-40; 22:14-23:56
 Tune: LYONS 10.10.11.11; Joseph Martin Kraus, 1784
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Ride On! Ride On in Majesty

Luke 19:36-38; Zech. 9:9

Henry H. Milman, 1827; adapt. Lavon Bayler, 1993

1 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 2 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 3 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!
 4 Ride on! Ride on in maj - es - ty!

O Christ, with brave hu - mil - i - ty,
 As crowds of peo - ple come to see
 Ride on in hum - ble dig - ni - ty;
 For you have set your peo - ple free

On low - ly colt, your road pur - sue,
 And shout ho - san - nas, lift - ing high
 Be - hold the ones you came to save
 And we, re - mem - bering all your pain,

as palms and cloaks are spread for you.
 their praise for one a - bout to die.
 from sense - less life and end - less grave.
 now meet a - gain to hail your reign.

Henry H. Milman, a priest of the Church of England, served successively as professor of poetry at Oxford, canon of Westminster, and dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London. He was also a successful playwright and historian.

Tune: ST. DROSTANE L.M.
 John B. Dykes, 1862
 Alternate tune: WINCHESTER NEW

From Gray Until Golden

ST. DENIO (11.11.11.11)

1. From gray un - til gold - en, in prayer and in praise,
 from ash - es of mem - orry, to stones rolled a - way;
 From Hope born of star - light, to Palms, Pass - ion raised,
 we walk through Lent's jour - ney, as God guides each day.

Words: Hank Fairma, 2026, Music: Welsh hymn melody
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ANNOUNCEMENTS



SAFE CONDUCT TRAINING SUNDAY, 5/3, 11:30-2:30 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, 4/19 and include special dietary restrictions or food allergies, and accessibility needs to:

safechurch@stjohnuccfreeport.org