

## 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](http://www.stjohnuccfreeport.org)

on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/stjohnuccfreeport](http://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://facebook.com/stjohnuccfreeport/live).

Scan this code to access our Online Giving Portal:



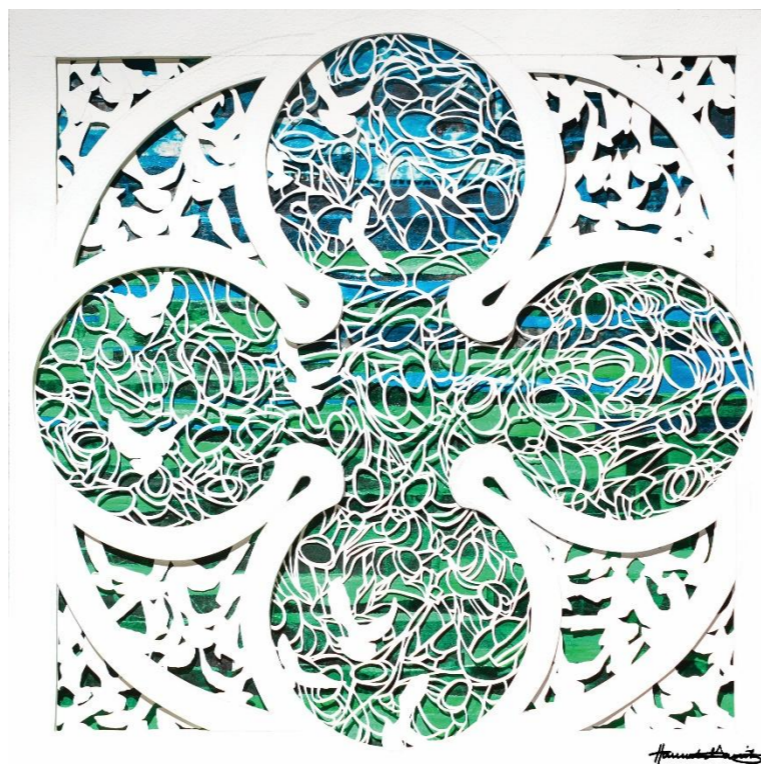
We thank you for your continued generous support of St. John UCC.

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Meet Me in Galilee  
Hannah Garrity

18x18" Hand-dyed and collaged newspaper with paper lace overlay

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EASTER / RESURRECTION SUNDAY

the good news is...alive in the world

April 5, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC

RESURRECTION INTROIT

*Christ the Lord is Risen Today*

Douglas Wagner

The Bell Choir

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: On Thursday,  
we thought the good news had been silenced.

**All: On Friday,  
we thought the good news had taken its last breath.**

One: On Saturday,  
we thought the good news had been buried.

**All: But today,  
we know the good news is alive and well.  
The good news is dancing!  
The good news is on the loose!**

One: The good news is out in the world, calling your name!

**All: Alleluia! Even death has lost its sting.  
Let us worship our good-news Christ.**

\*HYMN

*Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

EASTER HYMN

(WAR #288)

\* WELCOME & 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

### Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Gracious God, we are an Easter people.

We shout your good news from the rooftop.  
We follow the disciples, who ran to look for you.

We want to follow the angels, who said, “Be not afraid,”  
but sometimes we are afraid.  
And we don’t know where to look.  
And we are worried we’ll say the wrong thing.

So welcome us to renewed life,  
for we are imperfect Easter people.  
We are best intentions and best laid plans.  
We are an out-of-tune chorus of “alleluias.”  
We are on our way, but we are not there yet.

Show us how to embody your good news in this world.  
Show us how to be your Easter people.  
With hope for tomorrow, we pray. Amen.

### Words of Affirmation

One: Family of faith,... join me in this good news declaration:

**All: Through Jesus Christ we are seen,  
welcomed, loved, and challenged to build  
the hope and peace that is God’s Realm.**

One: This is the good news of the gospel!

**All: Thanks be to God. Amen!**

## GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

## FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

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

*An Easter Carol*  
The Chancel Choir  
Gordon Young

## GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 28:1-10 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

## MESSAGE

“...there they will see me.” Rev. Hank Fairman

## \*HYMN

*The Day of Resurrection!*  
WAR #298  
LANCASHIRE

## 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** *Dance on “Gaudeamus Pariter”* Mary Beth Bennett

**Doxology (CH #48 lyrics)** OLD 100<sup>TH</sup>

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise Christ, all creatures here below!  
Praise Holy Spirit, evermore!  
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen.

## CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

### Sharing Celebrations and Concerns

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

## Invitation to the Table

One: On Easter morning, the women went looking for Jesus.  
Jesus met the women in their seeking.  
Jesus met them in their moment of fear and grief.  
Jesus met them when they felt lost.  
Jesus met them and provided hope.

**All: We are like the women, seeking Christ,  
we have known grief or fear, have felt lost,  
and are in need of some hope.**

One: Then come to this Table.  
All are welcome here.

**All: For just as Jesus met the women in their seeking,  
Jesus meets us here, saying, “Do not be afraid.”**

## Communion Prayer & Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

### Sharing the Elements

*Christ’s table is open to all who wish to participate.  
Red Wine and White Grape juice and **all bread is gluten free**  
meeting the personal and dietary needs of every person.*

*Please take a serving cup and wait to join everyone gathered in the Sanctuary  
and at home in communion as one body in Christ’s extravagant welcome and love.*

## Prayer of Thanksgiving (speaking together)

Loving Christ, thank you for the bread that nourishes our  
bodies, and the cup that quenches our thirst.

Thank you for this community, which reminds us who we are.

Thank you for the promise that at this Table,  
and at every table, you will be there bringing us together.

May this holy meal nourish us to go out into the world speaking  
of your good, good news. With joy and hope we pray. Amen.

## \*HYMN

*Christ is Alive!* TRURO

WAR #312

## \*BENEDICTION & \*RESPONSE

*That Easter Day with Joy Was Bright* PUER NOBIS  
WAR #299, v. 4

## \*POSTLUDE

*Paschal Fanfare* Malcolm Archer



Thank You to those who  
provided flowers for our  
“Easter garden!”

### In Celebration of:

Our kids and 4 grandkids by Tim & Lisa Ebbers

Our children and grandchildren by Dan & Pam Wessel

Our Wonderful Family by Jeff & Dana Williams

### In Memory of:

Our parents Jerry & Sharon Simler  
by Greg & Anita Bicksler

My husband Edward Orde by Connie Orde

Our parents Robert & Carolyn Moyer by Connie Orde

Wayne Artman by the Queckboerners & Mary Artman

Our parents Roy & Betty Wessel and Bill & Jane Kuntz by  
Dan & Pam Wessel

Michael & Sandy Bocker, and Kayla LaBarge  
by Jeff & Dana Williams

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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](mailto:safechurch@stjohnuccfreeport.org)*



### **2026 FREEPORT 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](mailto: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.



## 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*



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>