

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.

In May we will 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.

5/17 Starting the WISE PROCESS

Hear from First Congregational in Downers Grove about their WISE journey

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

Senior Pastor:

Rev. Henry E. "Hank" Fairman hank@stjohnuccfreeport.org
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Visitation Pastor:

Rev. Ted Michalsen ted@stjohnuccfreeport.org
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Director of Congregational Life:

Pam Wessel pam@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

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SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER MENTAL HEALTH SUNDAY

May 17, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *With High Delight, Let Us Unite* arr. John Leavitt

*CALL TO WORSHIP Diane Jochum

One: Let God arise, and let our anxieties be scattered.

All: Let those who feel broken in mind, body, or spirit find refuge in God's presence.

One: As smoke is driven away,
let the weight of depression and despair be lifted.

All: As wax melts before the fire,
may our hearts melt into the healing love of God.

One: Sing to God, sing praises to his Name!

All: We celebrate the Defender of the vulnerable,
the Parent to orphans, the Champion of the lonely.

One: God gives the lonely a home
and brings prisoners into freedom.

All: God sends a gracious rain,
refreshing us when we are weary.

One: You, O God, provide for the needy.

All: Praise be to God,
who gives strength and power to all people.

*HYMN *Be Still, My Soul* FINLANDIA
WAR #451

* 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.

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

GATHERING PRAYER

Silent Centering

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Holy One, we are all seekers.

No matter where we are in the world,
no matter what our strengths or weaknesses,
no matter what our language or our creed,
you seek us out with the eternal parental love of the Creator.

No matter that you are always present with and for us,
no matter that we do not always recognize the form,
no matter that we may have a dimness of sight as in a mirror,
we continue to seek you with the unquenchable human desire to
know you and to rest in you.

In you we live and move and have our being.
Guide us now to recognize that truth
as we gather with you at this hour. Amen.

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Acts 1:6-14 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Jan Kunkle

Change for Change Mission Collection

This month’s collection will support:
Boys & Girls Club of Freeport & Stephenson County,
assisting in funding special programs where federal grants were defunded.

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

Found / Tonight Miranda, Pasek, & Paul
The Bell Choir arr. Narverud

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

John 17:1-11 *NRSV, Updated Edition*

MESSAGE

More Good Days, Together Rev. Ted Michalsen

***HYMN**

Precious Lord, Take My Hand PRECIOUS LORD
WAR #500

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

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.

Offering Song *We are Many and One* Angrisano/Hart/Liles
arr. David Brinker

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

A Litany For Mental Health “*More good days, together*”

See insert

***HYMN**

For the Healing of the Nations REGENT SQUARE
WAR #621

***BENEDICTION**

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

***POSTLUDE** *You Shall Go Out with Joy* Douglas W. Wagner

ANNOUNCEMENTS



**PEACE POLE PROJECT INSTALLATION DAY
SATURDAY, 5/30, 8:30 AM**

Join the Mission & Outreach Team with the Peace Pole Project on Saturday, 5/30, at 8:30 am. The Peace Pole will be installed on the Park Boulevard front lawn of the church near the flagpole. Its location will be registered with The Peace Pole Project, sharing our commitment to building a more just and peaceful world in our time.

Please sign up in the Narthex if you are available to assist with the Peace Pole Installation so we can plan accordingly.



SAVE THE DATES!

Freeport Pride Picnic 6/13 | 11:00 am – 3:00 pm

LGBTQ+ Pride Sunday, 6/14, 10:00 am

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS



PENTECOST POTLUCK PICNIC 5/31, Following Worship

Start the summer off with a gathering of friends! Add your names to the sign-up sheet located on the bulletin board or call the church office.

Save the date and plan your favorite summer dish to pass!



HONORING THE 2026 GRADUATES 5/31, During Worship

St. John UCC celebrates with our members and friends who graduate high school, college, or graduate school this spring.

*Please submit names, honors, and information
to the church office by 5/17.*



COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

The Kampmeier Fund in the St. John Church Endowment was created to extend the generous spirit of our members and friends for educational scholarships. Members of our church community with acceptance to college are invited to apply.

While a specific amount of award cannot be determined until all applications are received, applicants should anticipate assistance with books and supplies.

Applications are available from the church office, or by emailing Pam Wessel at pam@stjohnuccfreeport.org.

Deadline for Applications is Sunday, 8/2

1. **A LITANY FOR MENTAL HEALTH, “More good days, together”**

One: Gracious God, you created us for community, knowing that we are better together.

On this Mental Health Sunday, we gather to celebrate the hope of "More Good Days, Together".

All: May your Spirit strengthen our minds and protect our hearts.

One: We recognize that 1 in 5 people experience a mental health condition each year, and 5 in 5 of us are managing our mental health every day.

For the times we have felt isolated, ashamed, or broken, we ask for your healing light.

All: Lord, hear our prayer for comfort and connection.

One: We pray against the stigma that keeps us silent. Help us to create spaces of radical belonging, where every unique experience is validated and supported.

All: Help us create more good days, together.

One: For those navigating depression, anxiety, trauma, or burnout, we pray for moments of peace and access to the care they need.

All: May your peace, which passes all understanding, guard our hearts.

One: We give you thanks for calling counselors, therapists, doctors, and support systems that help us navigate the hard days.

All: We bless the work of healing hands and listening ears.

One: As we look toward the future, we commit to being a community that walks alongside one another, understanding that "good" is defined by our unique experiences and goals.

All: With your help, we will move from merely surviving to thriving and flourishing.

One: God of comfort, companion on our journey, remind us that we never walk alone.

All: May your love bind us together, making way for more good days, together. Amen



*Thank you to all who shared their gifts and time
in our Music Ministry in 2025-2026!*

As our regular ensembles take a summer break, our Music Director, Britney Kieselhorst is looking for volunteers to provide special music during worship. If you feel called to share your gifts, please take a moment to complete the form linked below:



<https://bit.ly/SJUCC2026SummerMusic>

Britney would love to fill as many of these opportunities as possible!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out. And if you (or someone you know) may be interested in joining the music ministry this fall, please contact Britney (britney@stjohnuccfreeport.org), or encourage them to reach out and join our email list.

We are always glad to welcome new participants!