

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 April and 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.

5/3 Family Systems
Families significantly impact a person's healing and recovery

5/10 Why go WISE?
What would becoming a WISE congregation mean?

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

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Church Musician: Randy Cook

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FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Sun of Righteousness, Arise* arr. Michael Burkhardt

*CALL TO WORSHIP Tim Ebbers

One: Like the multi-hued pebbles
gathered onto a beach,

All: we come from many places.

One: Like river stones, smooth from life's surges
or chipped in the world's torrents,

All: so we come worn and wounded.

One: Like precious stones,
chosen, crafted and valued,

All: so we come, cared about and loved by God.

One: Like the stones of a building,

All: so God brings us together.

One: Come, living stones, into God's presence!
Come to worship today.

*HYMN *Here I Am, Lord* Dan Schutte
WAR #559

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

GATHERING PRAYER

Silent Centering

** 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.*

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Creator of the heavens, earth, and us,
you have shaped a place for us made of love and held in grace.

It is filled with the whispers of the ancients who followed you
and sculpted our faith. Help us turn our ears to hear them, for
they have so much to say:

The echoes of worried and weary feet,
that cause us to pause, or stumble, or feel failing.
Unseen wiggles that alter our path,
that cause us to question our faith and your goodness.
So much hurt and pain. So much to lament.

Yet our hearts know that you are God,
and our faith rebounds
every time love's hope sounds across the earth.

Speak your word into this place again,
that we may know your way,
your truth, and your life. Amen.

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

NRSV, Updated Edition

FOR THE CHILD IN ALL OF US

Liz Reyes

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

All Things Bright and Beautiful Barbara B. Kinyon
The Bell Choir

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

John 14:1-14

NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

Truth and Life

Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

On Eagle's Wings

Michael Joncas

WAR #438

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

Hymn for Bells

Donald E. Allured

The Bell Choir

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.

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION

Sharing Celebrations and Concerns

Invitation to the Table

One: We come in the long days of risen joy,
of the communion of the saints,

**All: because Christ has passed by –
the dust is stirred up, the stones put down,**

One: We arrive questioning, and depart with faith knit whole,

**All: and we rejoice like those at table in Emmaus,
and the upper room in Jerusalem.**

One: We celebrate God's way, truth, and life in us,
joined as one body in Christ

Communion Prayer

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

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

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)

Thank you, God, for life in the Spirit of Jesus,
for gladness in this bread and cup, for love that cannot die.

With gratitude for nourishing us at this table, we dedicate:

our lips to be the voice of Christ to the despairing;

our hands to be Christ's hands,

reaching out to the broken places and people;

our feet to walk with Christ to visit those who are shunned;

our bodies to be Christ's living body to seek and serve the
world, to bring your realm of peace with justice into reality.

Take us. Empower us. Use us.

In Christ's name we pray; in Christ's Way we serve. Amen.

*HYMN

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Jackson/Miller

WAR #614

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE

Amazing Grace!

NEW BRITAIN

WAR #422, v. 5

*POSTLUDE

You Are the Way

arr. Mark Sedio



DAY TRIP TO THE MILTON HOUSE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD MUSEUM

6/20, 8:00 am Departure

The Mission & Outreach Committee invites you to escape and go North for a family friendly historically educational time at the only certified Underground Railroad site in WI. Come learn about historical figures and experience what former African American slaves encountered, escaping slavery, on their travels north to freedom. Feel free to invite friends. Good fellowship time follows over lunch and our travels together.

Date: Saturday, June 20, 2026

Time: Leave church parking lot at 8:00 a.m. (carpooling)

What: One hour tour of the museum and grounds begins at 10:30 a.m.

Lunch: In Janesville after the museum tour before heading home (location with details TBD. Each person will cover their own lunch expenses at the restaurant.)

Tour Ticket Prices:

Adults 18-61	\$15 ea
Senior Adults 62+	\$10 ea
Youth 6-17	\$10 ea
Child 5 & under	Free
Military Vets	Free

Please sign up for which tickets and how many you need from the categories above, listed on the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by 5/17. Make checks payable to St. John UCC with Milton House Trip on the memo line. Electronic payments can be made via the church donation portal with notation for the Milton House Trip included.



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 | Deodorant |
| Shampoo & Conditioner | Tampons & Pads |
| Hand or Body Lotion | Face Wash |
| Lip Balm | Toothbrush & Toothpaste |

Follow this link to our Amazon wishlist:



<https://bit.ly/HELIXCareCupboard>



**2026 FREEPORT PRIDE PLANNING MEETING
5/10, Following Worship**

There will be a meeting on 5/10 following worship to continue 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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



SPRING MAY BASKETS: DONATIONS NEEDED

The Wellness Ministry Team will be assembling Spring May Baskets for our aging in place, senior living, and rehabilitation care community members.

If you would like to donate a few items, please place them into the basket in the narthex.

Please drop off your donation no later than Monday, 5/4. Thank you for spreading some sunshine and brightening someone's day!



**CLIMATE CHANGE SPEAKER SERIES
5/6, 6:30 PM**

There is just one more opportunity to learn about the cost of living with climate change. The fifth and final lecture is scheduled for Wednesday, 5/6 at 6:30 pm at the Freeport Public Library. The featured speaker will be Dr. Jessica Rudnick, State Climate Resilience Specialist with the U of I Extension. She will be joined by Randi Kohlbauer, Environmental, Health & Safety, and Operations Coordinator for the City of Freeport, and Rob Boyer, Freeport City Manager. Refreshments will be provided.



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 dress appropriately for the weather and be prepared to get a little dirty.

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



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@stjohnuccfreeport.org.

Deadline for Applications is Sunday, 8/2