

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!

Bring Flat Jesus with you wherever you go this summer!

Be sure to take him along on all your adventures, snap some photos, and send the photos to: flatjesus@stjohnuccfreeport.org

We'll post them in the Sunday School hallway so you can see what Flat Jesus has been up to!



AMITY UNDERWEAR DRIVE

There is a great need for new children's underwear for underprivileged households in our community. We are called to reach out and let them know that we care. Starting in July, a laundry basket will be placed in the Atrium for your donations of sizes 8-18 underwear of all types.

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

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SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 12, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Almighty God, Your Word is Cast* arr. S. P. Johnson

*CALL TO WORSHIP Christina Fairman

One: We bring our hopes and fears,
our struggles and our lives as they are.

All: We come into the presence of the One who leaves doors and futures open to gracious possibilities.

One: God's word lights the paths before us.
May this time of worship empower us to make faithful choices.

All: God's word lights the paths before us. May this time of worship renew and restore our relationships with God and each other.

One: God's word lights the paths before us.
And as we walk this path, we pause.

All: And we worship our ever-present God, whose word lights the path before us.

*HYMN *You Are Salt for the Earth* BRING FORTH
NCH #181

*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

Silent Centering

Congregational Prayer (speaking together)

Light up our path, God of Peace,
with voices of our ancestors whispering
and singing hope and encouragement.

We come before you scattered in the present
and separated from our past.

We play favorites when we shouldn't,
hold grudges instead of forgiveness,
and fail to do the work of healing and reconciliation
so needed in your world.

It is rocky ground, and we know we cannot grow here.

Show us, God of Peace,
the way of love through every division,
the same way you showed those
who walked this road before us.

Remind us that the union they found
in their spirits can illuminate this moment.

In their wisdom, we can seek wholeness in your Spirit
and find peace in your presence.

Hold us together from generation to generation
as the joy in your heart. Amen.

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Genesis 25:19-34

NRSV, Updated Edition

A MOMENT FOR ALL AGES

Jan Kunkle

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

Control Zoe Wees et. al.
Allie Daggert, with Judi Buus

GOD'S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

Sacrifice Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

A Sower Came from Ancient Hills SEACHRIST
GTG #171

PRESENTING OUR HEARTS AND GIFTS TO GOD

Moment for Mission Summer Giving Campaign

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 *Let My Heart Be Good Soil* Handt Hanson

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

*HYMN

God Be With You Till We Meet Again

NCH #81

GOD BE WITH YOU

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE

With Grateful Heart

GRATUS

WAR #729, v.1

*POSTLUDE

Bring Forth (reprise)

Marty Haugen

ANNOUNCEMENTS



BECOMING WISE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Next Steps: The Wise Covenant Team

St. John UCC is walking the path towards being recognized as a congregation that is WISE for mental health (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged). Our next step is to form a WISE Covenant writing team. The Wellness Ministry team is inviting people who have a passion for mental health to collaborate in this endeavor. This is a six-month commitment that will begin at the 7/19 meeting following worship. *To sign up or for more information reach out to Pastor Ted or a member of the Wellness Ministry*

St. John United Church of Christ – Freeport, IL

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



LITTLE CUBS FIELD DAY Sunday, 8/2 12:00pm

As a part of this year's Summer FUNd Giving Campaign, St. John UCC will be hosting a picnic at Little Cub's Field with food, fun, and community! For more information reach out to team captains, Lisa Ebbers, Jill Gastel, Anita Bicksler, Kelly Priewe, or Carla Meyer.



ANNUAL ICE CREAM SOCIAL Wednesday, 8/12 4:30pm-7:00pm

Come enjoy an evening of fun, food and relaxation with friends from the St. John UCC community. Barbecue sandwiches, hot dogs, chips, pasta salad and drinks will be served, along with cake, pie and ice cream to complete your meal! Tickets are available in the church office or on Sundays.

**\$8 for BBQ or Hot Dog,
with Chips, Pasta Salad, and Drink**

\$5 for Pie or Cake, Ice Cream, and Drink

If you are able to donate a pie or cake, or willing to volunteer your time to serve as cashier, server, kitchen crew, or cleanup crew, please sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Thank you for your help!

You Are Salt for the Earth, O People

Paraphr. by Marty Haugen, 1986; alt.

Matt. 5:13-15

Unison
D (allow to ring off)

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!

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

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

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

171 A Sower Came from Ancient Hills



1 A Sow - er came from an - cient hills and cast good
 2 A Sow - er walked through - out the land and, ev - ery -
 3 The Seed was bur - ied deep in death be - neath a
 4 O Christ, you come a - mong us still, the Sow - er



seed a - broad: his field, ten thou - sand hu - man hearts; his
 where he trod, he sowed his life be - cause he was him -
 blood - red sky, and deep - er still was bur - ied hope for
 and the Seed. As once you sowed the truth of God in



seed, the word of God. And some who lis - tened would not
 self the Seed of God. But then, a - top a bar - ren
 those who watched him die. But then, in Jo - seph's gar - den
 glow - ing word and deed, im - plant your Word in wait - ing



hear, and some who heard for - got. But some re - ceived in
 hill, be - neath a dark - ening sky, they threw God's Seed on
 fair, as dawn broke o'er the land, the Seed, from three days'
 hearts, and let it there take hold, un - til it bears in



fer - tile soil the truth the Sow - er taught.
 ston - y ground and left it there to die.
 si - lent sleep, a - woke at God's com - mand!
 fruit - ful lives a har - vest hun - dred - fold.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

All three synoptic gospels record both the telling and the explanation of Jesus' parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23/Mark 4:3-8, 14-20/Luke 8:5-8, 11-15). Because the seed equals "the word," Jesus (as the Word made flesh) becomes the Seed in this expansion of the parable.

God Be with You

Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1880; alt.



1 God be with you till we meet a - gain; By good coun - sel guide, up - hold you,
 2 God be with you till we meet a - gain; Wings of shel - ter safe - ly hide you,
 3 God be with you till we meet a - gain; When life's per - ils thick con - found you,
 4 God be with you till we meet a - gain; Keep love's ban - ner float - ing o'er you,



With a shep - herd's care en - fold you: God be with you till we meet a - gain.
 Dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you: God be with you till we meet a - gain.
 Put un - fail - ing arms a - round you: God be with you till we meet a - gain.
 Smite death's threat - ening wave be - fore you: God be with you till we meet a - gain.



Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Je - sus' feet;
 till we meet, till we meet a - gain, till we meet,



till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet a - gain.
 till we meet, till we meet a - gain,

