
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!

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!*



SAFE CHURCH TRAINING Today after Worship, 11:30-2:30 pm

Church members who work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults and church leadership should attend a Safe Church Training every three years to review our policies for protecting people in our care. Please see Christina for more information.

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

Senior Pastor:

Rev. Henry E. “Hank” Fairman

hank@stjohnuccfreeport.org

mobile: 703-473-3534

Visitation Pastor:

Rev. Ted Michalsen

ted@stjohnuccfreeport.org

mobile: 440-536-1044

Director of Congregational Life:

Pam Wessel

pam@stjohnuccfreeport.org

Creative & Administrative Assistant:

Myles Halberstadt

myles@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

1010 South Park Boulevard Freeport, IL 61032
815.235.2824 • www.stjohnuccfreeport.org



TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 16th, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Prelude on “St. Denio”

Matthew H. Corl

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Lisa Schubert

One: We have climbed up trees and over mountains
hoping to find a place of belonging.

All: Love is possible.

One: We cross the boundaries that divide us
by ages and stages,
ethnicities and genders,
hurts and disagreements.

All: Love is possible.

One: We open our hearts and ready our hands
to reach out to one another,
and discover One who is within and beyond us.

All: Love is possible.

One: Love is possible!
Let us worship together in love.

*HYMN

God Made from One Blood

ST. DENIO

NCH #427

*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)

We reach out to you, God,
in our believing and in our doubting.

We reach out to you with
our dreams, our songs, and our listening.
We know you have already reached out to us
before we even thought about reaching out to you,
so we come to give you thanks today.

Sometimes our vision becomes focused on ourselves.

Sometimes we respond to new visions with fear
and try to block them, even injuring those who share them.

Sometimes we keep dreams locked in our heads
and focus on the grief for what is lost to us.

God, return us to you in community.
You will do what you will do.
Yet, you give us for us to do what we will do.
In the mystery in the middle of both of those truths,
you call on us to work for good.

Whatever we do, we do it in the knowledge of your love.
May it be so always. Amen.

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Genesis 45:1-15

NRSV, Updated Edition

A MOMENT FOR ALL AGES

Tim Ebbers

Backpack Blessing

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

Live Like That Frey/McDonald/Glover
Myles Halberstadt, Randy Cook, and Hugh Knapp

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 15:21-28

NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

Reconciliation, Rev. Hank Fairman
and Other Hard Things to Do

*HYMN

God Give Me Time SHEPHERD’S PIPES
Words & Music: Shirley Erena Murray, © 2005 Hope Publishing Co.

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 Cannot Measure How You Feel* R. Purvis

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

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

*HYMN

We Offer Christ CHARTERHOUSE
NCH #527

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE *With Grateful Heart* GRATUS
WAR #720, v.I

*POSTLUDE *In Christ There is No East or West* arr. Dale Wood

ANNOUNCEMENTS



2026 BACKPACK BLESSING
TODAY

Whether your bag is tagging along with you at preschool, elementary school, high school, or college, bring it in for a blessing during worship!



SUNDAY, 8/30

Our Rally Day celebration welcomes us back from summer’s fun and labors. Come join in morning worship, sharing stories of God’s blessings for us all. Stay for the annual Rally Day Pot-Luck Lunch.

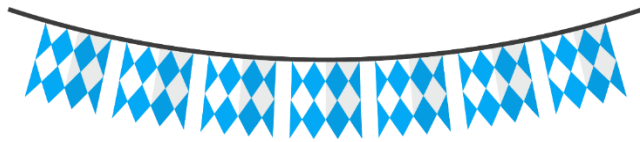
Bring your family’s favorite dish to pass and sample others’ faves. Celebrate as the community in Christ at St. John UCC, sharing the radical hospitality of God’s all-embracing love!

Please sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex!

ANNOUNCEMENTS



**SAVE THE DATE
SEPTEMBER 6TH**



Oktoberfest

**SAVE THE DATE
OCTOBER 3RD**



Becoming Wise For Mental Health

Second meeting today:

8/16, 11:30 AM

God Made from One Blood

427

Thomas H. Troeger, 1988

1 God made from one blood all the fam - ilies of earth,
2 We turn to you, God, with our thanks and our tears
3 Through fam - ilies we've tast - ed the val - ue of trust
4 Help fam - ilies in all of their var - i - ous forms

the cir - cles of nur - ture that raise us from birth,
for all of the fam - ilies we've known through the years,
and felt what it means to be lov - ing and just,
to face with in - teg - ri - ty strug - gles and storms;

Com - pan - ions who join us to work through each stage
The in - ti - mate net - works on whom we de - pend
Yet fam - ilies have al - so be - trayed their best goals,
Grant peace to our homes that will nur - ture the bud

of child - hood and youth and a - dult - hood and age.
of par - ents and part - ners and chil - dren and friends.
mis - treat - ing their mem - bers and bru - is - ing their souls.
of peace for the fam - ilies you made from one blood.

This text was commissioned by Yale University Press for A New Hymnal for Colleges and Schools (1992) to provide a hymn that recognizes the many different kinds of families that are represented when a campus congregation gathers to worship.

*Tune: ST. DENIO 11.11.11.11.
Adapt. from a Welsh ballad in John Roberts' Caniadaeth y Cysegr, 1839*

God, Give Me Time (to Learn the Words)

SHEPHERD'S PIPES (8.5.8.5 D)

1. God, give me time to learn the words I find so hard to say: the
 2. God, give me ears to heed the words that his - tor - y for - got, that
 3. God, give me time to grasp the words that threat-en and de - stroy, the
 4. God, give me time to meet your word, trans - form-ing as I go my

lov - ing words, for - giv - ing words that take the sting a - way;
 clear the air for doves to fly, that loose the dead - ly knot;
 ea - sy words of pol - it ics that kill cre - a - tion's joy;
 lit - tle world, my lar - ger world by all I do and know;

God, give me calm to ride the storm when waves of an - ger rise,
 com - pass-ion that the Spir - it - it brings more po - tent than the law,
 the speech that will pro - lif - er - ate e - con - o mies of greed,
 en - count-er - ing in oth-er's faith the wis-dom and the grace

a mo-moment when I grasp a truth my less - er self de - nies.
 with mer - cy wip - ing debt a - way and clos - ing hun - ger's maw.
 the thied of chil - drens her - it - age, the poi - son in the seed.
 that Jes - us Christ was born to bring and give the hu - man race.

Words by Shirley Erena Murray, Music by Annabeth McClelland Gay
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WITNESS

We Offer Christ

527

Brian Wren, 1986

1 We of-fer Christ to all the world a - round us, born in - to faith,
 2 We of-fer Christ from all our best tra - di - tions, by grace a - lone,
 3 We of-fer Christ the bar - ri - er - be - strid - er, whose full-ness far
 4 We of-fer Christ and, God-be-loved, our Sav - ior now of - fers us,

re - leased from pride and shame; Em - braced by love, we show how
 a - mazed and strange - ly warmed, Cre - a - ted e - qual, stirred by
 ex - ceeds our lo - cal view, Whose Spir - it, breath - ing deep in
 born of the Spir - it's kiss, to love cre - a - tion and cre -

love has found us; at peace with God, we speak our Sav - ior's name.
 free - dom - vi - sions, self - crit - i - cal, pre - pared to be re - formed.
 ev - ery cul - ture, brings Christ to us, the same, yet strange - ly new.
 a - tion's Lov - er, with skill, com - pas - sion, jus - tice, care and peace.

"We Offer Christ" was commissioned by St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Orangeburg, South Carolina, for its 150th anniversary. The opening phrase derives from John Wesley's advice to Thomas Coke as he departed for America: "Offer them Christ."

Tune: CHARTERHOUSE 11.10.11.10.
 David Evans, 1927

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