

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!*



2026 BACKPACK BLESSING

SUNDAY, 8/16 10:00 AM

Ring in a new school year with us!
Kids, bring in your backpacks to receive a blessing
and tag as we celebrate you going back to school!

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

Senior Pastor:

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Church Musician: Randy Cook

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TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 2nd, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Here I Am to Worship

Tim Hughes

Performed by Sounds of the Spirit

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Shawn Killingbeck

One: Are you ready to step onto the mat with God?

All: We are ready!

One: Every push meets a pull. Every hold gets a twist.
Sweat stings the eye. Muscles are strained. The body gets tired.

All: We will not let go.

One: Come, you who have wrestled through the long night—
with questions, with fears, with the weight of the unknown

**All: We come, weary yet seeking, bruised and limping
yet longing for God's blessing.**

One: For the God who wrestles is the God who loves,
and the God who loves is the God who blesses!

*HYMN

Lord Jesus, Think On Me

SOUTHWELL

GTG #417

*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)

A sparring partner helps you to condition, strengthen your form, perfect your movements, and keen your vision to see the right opportunities. In you God we have a partner who is invested in our development. You receive in prayer our gentle wonderings and aggressive accusations holding us in the grip of the argument. Grapple with our questions and our doubts and do not let us escape until we learn what we need to discover. Hold us not with the grip of domination but with the bear hug of love that is unwilling to let go. Amen

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Genesis 33:22-31 NRSV, Updated Edition

A MOMENT FOR ALL AGES

Anita Bicksler

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

God is Great, God is Good Marty Parks

Performed by Sounds of the Spirit

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 14:13-21 NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE: Takedown’s Teach Lessons and Matches Builds Character

Rev. Ted Michalsen

*HYMN O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go ST. MARGRET
GTG #833

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 Table of Plenty D. Schutte, arr. R. DeBruyn

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: Ordinary bread made by ordinary people
is holy when we take and eat and remember.

All: Ordinary grapes harvested by ordinary people,
made into ordinary juice and wine
is holy when we take and drink and remember

One: This bread: Remember. It is the bread that gives eternal life
This cup: Remember. It is the cup that shares everlasting love.

All: Bread and wine, from ordinary to holy.
We remember, and know that God is good.

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)

We celebrate with you, Ever-creating God,
being nourished and refreshed at this table of grace and love.

Take hold of our lives: inspire us to live boldly,
strengthen us to love fully; and empower us to speak justly.

Send us out renewed for life’s extra innings,
and so far as it depends upon us,
help is to be peacemakers on every field walk upon.

Filled with your Spirit, send us out today! Amen

*HYMN Let Talents and Tongues Employ LINSTAD

WAR #698

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE With Grateful Heart GRATUS

WAR #720, v.I

*POSTLUDE Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ arr. Mark Sedio

ANNOUNCEMENTS



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!

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