
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!

Welcome back *Flat Jesus*!

Bring your Flat Jesus to worship with you on Rally Day, Sunday 8/30 when we'll take a welcome back group photo during worship. In the meantime, remember to send any last-minute photos to flatjesus@stjohnuccfreeport.org.

Check out the photo display in the Sunday School Hallway so you can see what Flat Jesus has been up to!

ST. JOHN UCC STAFF

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THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 23rd, 2026 • 10:00 am

WELCOMING MUSIC and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

I Go to the Rock

D. Hall, arr. C. Cole

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Christina Fairman

One: Hidden in the quiet of our morning
there is a blessing for us today.

**All: Sheltered amidst the reeds of a busy world
there is new life awaiting our care and attention.**

One: Floating above the currents of trial and tribulation,
a peaceful possibility approaches.

**All: Swaddled in the love and compassion
of God's grace, a new beginning is preserved.**

One: People knit in love, God's embracing and affirming arms
are reaching toward us with joy.

**All: For we are God's children,
named, holy, beloved.**

One: Come, let us welcome God's embrace
as we begin a new journey.

**All: Let us worship with the confidence
of God's abiding presence and rescuing love.**

*HYMN

God of Abraham and Sarah

CONSTANTINE

NCH #20

*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)

Mothering God,
midwife of all our experiences and dreams,
we thank you for the ways you have brought us
into new life over and over again.

We praise you for your protection of us when we feel
threatened in body or spirit.

We honor you for the cunning and ingenuity
with which you have crafted our opportunities
to grow and thrive.

In humble devotion, we remember your rescuing intervention
when the way has been difficult, and the light has grown dim.

Gathered as your people, wonderful and diverse,
we join as one body in worship – remembering
your saving Spirit and embodying your creative purpose.

Make yourself known to us as we worship, we pray. Amen.

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 51:1-6 NRSV, Updated Edition

A MOMENT FOR ALL AGES

Jan Kunkle

Change for Change Mission Collection

This month’s collection will support:
Boys and Girls Club of Freeport and Stephenson County

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

“Rock of Ages” Medley arr. C. Cole

GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE

Matthew 16:13-20 NRSV, Updated Edition

MESSAGE

What Did You Do This Summer? Rev. Hank Fairman

*HYMN

Lord of All Hopefulness SLANE
WAR #469

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 I Go to the Rock (Reprise) D. Hall, arr. C. Cole

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 Blessed Assurance ASSURANCE
WAR #426

*BENEDICTION

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

*POSTLUDE I Go to the Rock (Reprise) D. Hall, arr. C. Cole

ANNOUNCEMENTS



SUNDAY, 8/30

This year’s Rally Day celebration starts off at 10:00 am on Sunday, 8/30.
Come join in morning worship, sharing the songs and stories of God’s
blessings for us all in community with each other and our Creator.
Stay for the annual Rally Day Potluck 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!

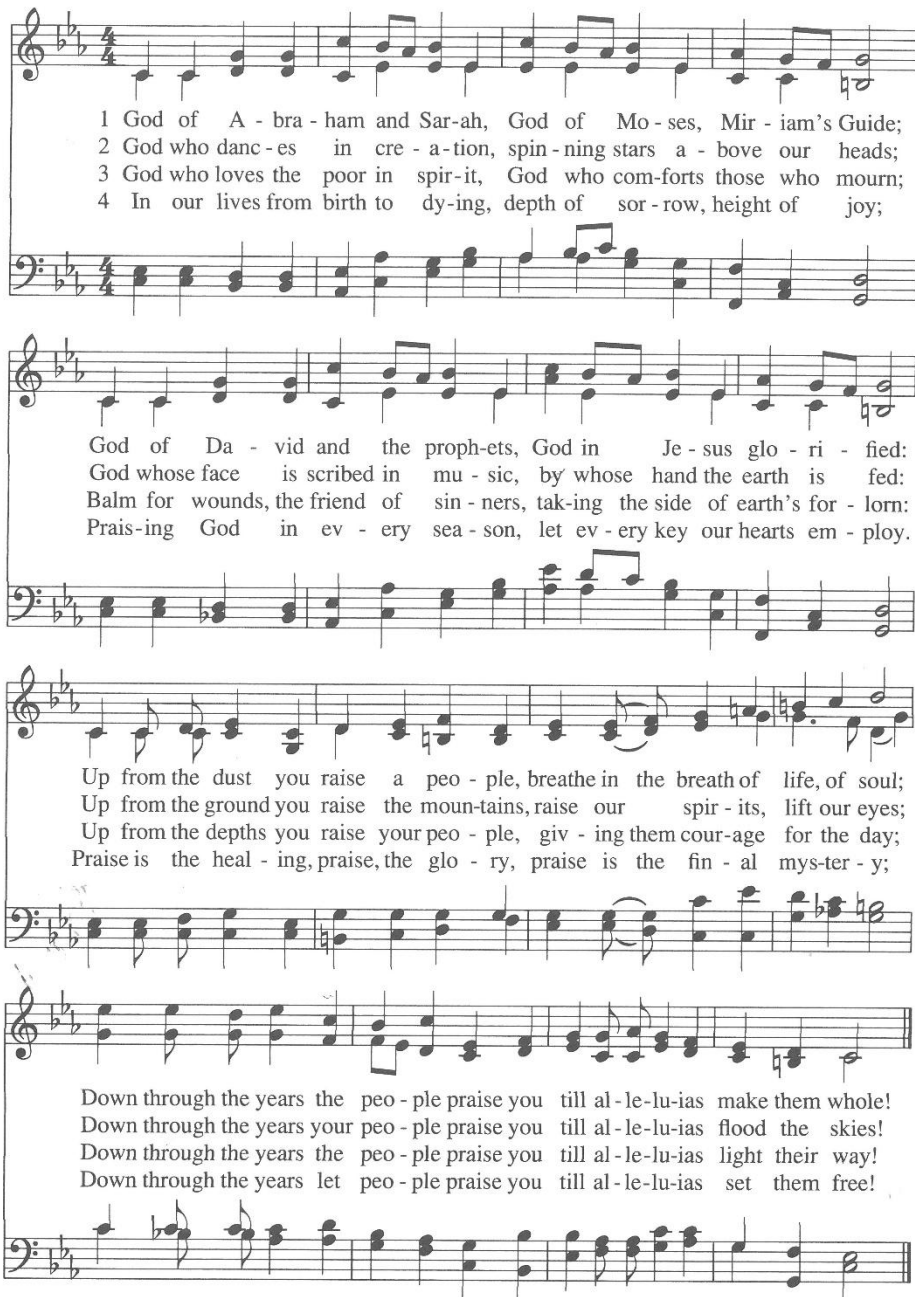
Please sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex!



SAVE THE DATE:
During Worship, Sunday, 9/6

Join in our annual hymn sing on Labor Day weekend! This all-ages
worship celebration brings our old favorites and our new-to-me hymns
to voice.

God of Abraham and Sarah

James Gertmenian, 1986; alt.


1 God of A - bra - ham and Sar-ah, God of Mo - ses, Mir - iam's Guide;
 2 God who danc - es in cre - a - tion, spin - ning stars a - bove our heads;
 3 God who loves the poor in spir - it, God who com - forts those who mourn;
 4 In our lives from birth to dy - ing, depth of sor - row, height of joy;

God of Da - vid and the proph - ets, God in Je - sus glo - ri - fied:
 God whose face is scribed in mu - sic, by whose hand the earth is fed:
 Balm for wounds, the friend of sin - ners, tak - ing the side of earth's for - lorn:
 Prais - ing God in ev - ery sea - son, let ev - ery key our hearts em - ploy.

Up from the dust you raise a peo - ple, breathe in the breath of life, of soul;
 Up from the ground you raise the moun - tains, raise our spir - its, lift our eyes;
 Up from the depths you raise your peo - ple, giv - ing them cour - age for the day;
 Praise is the heal - ing, praise, the glo - ry, praise is the fin - al mys - ter - y;

Down through the years the peo - ple praise you till al - le - lu - ias make them whole!
 Down through the years your peo - ple praise you till al - le - lu - ias flood the skies!
 Down through the years the peo - ple praise you till al - le - lu - ias light their way!
 Down through the years let peo - ple praise you till al - le - lu - ias set them free!

The healing power of praise and the history of God's dealings with humankind are the themes of this hymn, written by a United Church of Christ minister who is the grandson of Armenian immigrants. The tune is named for his father.

Tune: CONSTANTINE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Melody by James Gertmenian, 1986
 Harm. Ronald Huntington, 1986; alt.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



United Church of Christ

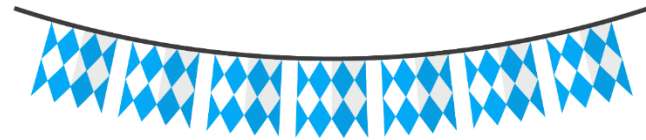
Outdoor Ministries

WOMEN'S SACRED RELAX AND RENEWAL

Pilgrim Park Camp, 10/2-3

Join for a 23-hour getaway to relax while engaging God's Holy Spirit! Cost is \$173. See TIDINGS or contact church office for more information and alternative pricing. To register, go to the camps website:

<https://pilgrimpark.campbrainregistration.com>



Oktoberfest

SAVE THE DATE: OKTOBERFEST
SATURDAY, 10/3, 4:00 PM-7:00 PM

Join with the community at St. John UCC in our second Oktoberfest festival on 10/3. Dress in your finest German attire (lederhosen and dirndls welcomed!) and celebrate our community's German roots with great music, food, and activities!

Tickets will be available at the door:

We hope this event will be a fun-filled event for St. John UCC and the whole Freeport community!

Come early and stay until the root beer ends!

Prost!