

St. John's UCC CELEBRATING 125 YEARS



*Rooted in Faith
Growing in Love
Serving with Hope*

Worship Booklet Index

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Today's Schedule

9:30 a.m.

Coffee Hour & History Displays Open

10:30 a.m.

Worship

11:30 a.m.

(or at the end of worship)

Picture on the front steps

Noon

Luncheon

1:00-3:00 p.m.

Open House Festival!

Music, Bounce House, Games, Crafts, Cotton Candy, & More

The Nursery has many activities for the young and young at heart. We ask that all children stay with a known adult during the activities led by Ms. Hanna our Nursery Attendant.

Notes About Worship

WELCOME VISITORS! Thank you for coming! Please sign a pew card to place in the offering plate.

WHAT DO I WEAR? PJs or prom dress, come as you are.

WHAT'S MY LINE? During worship, Leaders speak Plain Font, **YOU & everyone else speaks Bold Font**

WHEN DO I STAND/ WHAT IF I CAN'T STAND? Certain postures help our voices carry, for some that is standing. We welcome all bodies in whatever ability you have. When you see the congregation stand you are invited to check in with your body and decide what posture would allow you to best be in the moment. To know when you might want to change posture, look for the (*) beside the titles or listen for an invitation by the speaker.

WHAT ABOUT THE KIDS? Children are welcome in all aspects of worship. There are **activity bags** in the Narthex as you come into the sanctuary and **soft toys** in the back of the sanctuary for anyone needing to calm busy bodies. The **nursery** provides an alternative space so kids and parents can both get what they need from worship. Children are encouraged to check in with their adult before going downstairs with the nursery attendant.

AT THE END OF WORSHIP TODAY Please join us as we process out to the front church steps at the close of worship to take a picture as a community. If you are with a young-at-heart who might be distracted by a bouncy house, we invite you to exit through the back of the sanctuary to save the festival as a surprise.

How To Use A QR Code

1. Open the camera on your cellphone.
2. Pretend you are going to take a picture of one of the 4 boxes on this page.
3. The camera will focus on the box.
4. Words will appear on the bottom of the screen.
5. Tap on the words.

Fee Free digital donations can now be made on our website stjohns401.org. Follow the QR code and check out all the possibilities! This means no more buying checks and added security! >>>>>>



General Giving



<<<<<<We use an **Amazon List** to let people know what St. John's needs for our office and different ministries like the **Paper Angel Closet and Community Meals**. It is always changing. Check it out.

Amazon List



Tea & Coffee

St. John's also has two on-going fundraisers where you can order items and have them delivered right to your door with a portion of the proceeds supporting our ministries.



T-Shirts

Also, check out our Candle Crest Fundraiser happening now until September 27th. Order before the 27th and the candles will arrive at the church to be distributed around October 14th.



*Walk in love, as Christ loved us
Ephesians 5:2*

Advocating for Change

In 1999, General Synod affirmed four Special Mission Offerings for the United Church of Christ. Out of the four, the Neighbors in Need offering was highlighted as the offering for justice and compassion. The offering was tasked to help the church “advocate for a society where all people have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives.”

Today, this legacy continues as we follow the mandate for the offering to create justice not only through direct aid, but also through advocating for change. These advocacy efforts take place in partnership with the Washington, D.C. Office of Public Policy and Advocacy, the Education for Faithful Action Team, and recipients of the Neighbors in Need grants. Together, folks across the UCC work together to affect policy change guided by our faith.

When you give to Neighbors in Need, you make sure the United Church of Christ continues to be a leader for justice. Two-thirds of the offering supports justice projects across the church, and one-third supports the Council for American Indian Ministries.

Thank you for your gifts!



**Scan QR Code to
Donate Now**

There is an inherent connection between the Gospel call to respond to the hungry – the thirsty, the stranger, those in prison, and those who are sick – and the policy decisions that determine funding for issues such as school meal programs, global peacebuilding programs, standards for clean air, sentencing for nonviolent offenders, and health care access for all. Advocacy is essential to participating in God's mission in the world.

-From Building A Just World For All: A Toolkit For Faithful Advocacy

www.ucc.org/nin



St. John's Is a Just Peace Church

The Just Peace Church vision is a hallmark of United Church of Christ's (UCC) theological identity. For over three decades, the **Just Peace Church pronouncement** has informed UCC witness across the life of the church and inspired a grassroots movement of UCC congregations committed to corporately naming and boldly proclaiming a public identity as justice-doing, peace-seeking church. The Just Peace pronouncement, which was affirmed in 1985 at the 15th General Synod in Ames, Iowa, articulated for the first time a UCC position on war and peace as distinct from other historic Christian approaches, namely the theories and practices of Crusade, Pacifism, and Just War.

Since 1985, the Just Peace paradigm has been further developed by scholarly research and the creation of ten corresponding "Just Peacemaking Practices." More recently, Just Peace has received increased attention and affirmation by the World Council of Churches and other ecumenical partners. While acknowledging the UCC's groundbreaking proclamation, these new ecumenical efforts are interpreting Just Peace in new contexts and considering its merits as an emerging consensus on how to faithfully address critical justice and peace concerns among various faith traditions.

WHAT IS JUST PEACE? *Grounded in UCC polity and covenantal theology, the Just Peace Pronouncement and resulting church movement has at its core a call to alleviate systemic injustice of all kinds using non-violence, challenging us to explore the intersections between peace and justice, offering to the world the prophetic message, grounded in the hope of reconciliation in Jesus, that "Peace is possible!"*

St. John's lives out this commitment globally with our Sri Lankan partnership and the American Ceylon Mission Church. We live it locally by participating in chaplaincy programs and encouraging community connection and understanding.



This is the library in Jaffna Seminary St. John's supported and helped to update and restore after war.

St. John's Is an Open & Affirming Church

Open and affirming (ONA) is the United Church of Christ's (UCC) designation for congregations, campus ministries, and other bodies in the UCC which make a public covenant of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions.

'All Are Welcome' isn't enough

LGBTQ+* people of faith often experience emotional and spiritual injury in churches that condemn their capacity to love and seek love.

Because many have learned the hard way that "All Are Welcome" usually doesn't apply to them, LGBTQ+ folks can't assume that every church will be safe for them and their families.



A public welcome by an Open and Affirming (ONA) church sends a clear message to LGBTQ+ seekers that they have a home in the United Church of Christ.

A congregation's affirmation and support through an ONA covenant can be a life-changing and life-saving experience—especially for LGBTQ+ youth and LGBTQ+ seniors.

A public welcome to LGBTQ+ seekers helps churches grow. When ONA congregations attract new members, many of them are LGBTQ+ people and allies who value the congregation's commitment to inclusion and justice.

By adopting an ONA covenant, a congregation is taking seriously St. Paul's admonition to "accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." (Romans 15:7, NIV)

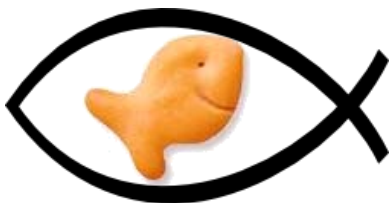
* LGBTQ+ is a shorthand for "lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning." The word "queer" has often been adopted by people who don't want to be constrained by the identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. The plus symbol reflects the diversity of sexual and gender identities in the human family.

What Is With The Goldfish Cracker In Communion?!

We celebrate Holy Communion using Goldfish Crackers and juice so it is accessible to Christians of all ages. The fish is made with wheat to remind us of the bread Jesus broke with the Disciples at the last supper. It is shaped like a fish to remind us of Christ's many miracles of bounty (read: Mark 6:31-44, 8:9-1 and John 21:1-14). We are also reminded with the fish shape that Jesus calls us all to be "Fishers of People" (read: Matthew 4:18-22) to spread God's love and grace to all we meet.

The first communion is a meal of Passover that Jesus uses to say goodbye to his followers and prepare them for what is about to happen in Jerusalem. Jesus is surrounded by a holy feast and decided to give his followers a symbol of remembrance. He could have chosen the fanciest to honor his heavenly royalty. The special item you only get once or twice a year, because Jesus is worth the wait. The costliest item would remind us that Christ is priceless and paid the ultimate cost. Instead, he chose the simple and common. He chose symbols encountered every day at almost every meal. Bread was easy to share with others no matter how many were around the table, unlike a fish or meat dish where there are good cuts and bad cuts. Everyone is invited to share equally. Bread and wine were also the most basic food. People of all social status had bread.

This is Christ's gift to us. Give us this day our daily bread, the bread of life. The cup of the new covenant poured out for the world promising Christ will come again. Praise be to God!



Today's Guest Preacher

Rev. Dr. Terrill N. Murff



Rev. Dr. Terrill N. Murff, is the newly called Interim Conference Minister of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ. His responsibilities as Interim Conference Minister covers the 200 churches of the northern part of Illinois. His geographical responsibilities extend from Lake Michigan west to the Quad cities of Iowa and Illinois. North from the Wisconsin border south to Champaign-Urbana.

Rev Dr. Murff brings enthusiasm, passion and a love for God to the Illinois Conference. Rev. Murff previously served as; Associate Conference Minister -responsible for Programs , Innovation and Events for the Illinois Conference which he held for 4 years.

Rev. Dr. Murff served as Pastor & Teacher at The Congregational Church of Park Manor, UCC for seven years. At The Congregational Church of Park Manor UCC, Pastor Murff exhibited excellent organizational skills, is an excellent preacher and visionary leader, who is able to work with and facilitate interactions among people from different socio-economic cultures, age groups and ethnic groups.

Prior to his call to; The Congregational Church of Park Manor, Rev. Dr. Murff served as, Youth Pastor at Covenant UCC. In this capacity, he faithfully served as a small number of youth, which increased to more than 600 youth, under the pastorate of Rev. Dr. Ozzie Smith Jr.. Rev. Dr. Murff created an innovative youth ministry that included a contemporary church worship service, Christian Education Programs, Teen Leadership Council, tutoring programs, mentoring programs and many other programs for children, youth and teens.

Rev. Dr. Murff currently serves on the Advocate-Health South Suburban Governing Council (which includes both South Suburban and Trinity hospitals). Rev. Dr. Murff also serves as Board member for Community Renewal Society, Midwest Ministry Development and Council Religious Leaders Chicago.

Rev. Dr. Murff's, educational background consists of receiving his Doctorate of Ministry in Preaching 2012, and his Master of Divinity degree in 2002, both from McCormick Theological Seminary. He also received an undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree, in Chemistry, from Chicago State University in 1982 where he worked as a Chemical Engineer for 27 years for W.R. Grace.

Rev. Murff is married to his high school sweetheart, Barbara; and they are the proud parents of three daughters: Tiffani, and twins Taahira and Talibah. They also have 5 grandchildren.

Announcements

Day of Caring Wednesday, September 30th 8am-3pm. We are partnering with United Way to prep the Community Garden for Winter and pack care kits for the schools and COAR. Sign up with Pastor.

Sunday School starts next Sunday at 9am!

Trunk or Treat Sunday, October 25th at 2pm-3pm. Parking Spaces can be signed up for in the Narthex. Invite your friends.

Totenfest/All Saint's Day Sunday, November 1st. Honor your loved ones and those who have passed on to eternal life by giving names to Pastor Muriel by October 20th or bring an item in memory of your loved one to worship.

Fellowship Circle All ladies are invited to join in fellowship and a treat on Thursday, October 8th at 11:30 in the Conference room.

Holiday Bazaar Friday, October 30th 9am-3pm and Saturday, October 31st 9am-1pm. Donations can be brought to the church starting October 1st

Community Garden is ongoing, feel free to stop by to water, weed or harvest.

The Belvidere Group (AA) meets every day at 7:00 pm

Chair and Mat Yoga with Katherine Ray is going weekly! Chair yoga at 10:00 am and mat yoga at 11:30 am No RSVP required and classes are \$8.00 financial assistance is available.

Order For Worship

PRELUDE & LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

WELCOME

*St. John's started as St. Johannes Evangelische Kirche in 1901
with a few German speaking families. We honor their
commitment to faith today.*

PRAYER

Jauchzt dem Herrn, alle Welt! Dient dem Herrn mit Freuden;
kommt vor sein Angesicht mit Frohloeden! Denn der Herr ist
freundlich, und seine Gnade währt ewig, und seine Wahrheit
für und für. Halleluja.

**Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the
Lord with gladness; come before His presence with
rejoicing! For the Lord is good, and His mercy endures
forever, and His truth from generation to generation.
Hallelujah**

MUSICAL CALL TO WORSHIP "On This Special Day"

Solo, Jeanne Anderson

In 2018 St. John's took the bold step to become an Open and Affirming Congregation. Which means we acknowledge and celebrate all who journey in faith regardless of gender or sexuality. Since then, we remind ourselves at the beginning of worship of our extravagant welcome we are called to uphold.

***RESPONSIVE WELCOME STATEMENT**

At St. John's United Church of Christ, we are Living Outwardly & Valuing Everyone!

We live and work amid God's love!

In that spirit, we extend love to all who come into our midst, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, nationality, skin color, culture, differing abilities, age or political affiliations, to participate fully in all aspects of church.

Our ministry is to bring the Good News of Christ's love to all.

We work in God's name to tear down walls and build community.

To walk with each other through all of life's circumstances,

To provide for those in need,

To offer comfort to the hurting and the sick,
and to uplift the broken hearted.

Where we fail, we ask for God's forgiveness.

May the Holy Spirit and our siblings continue to challenge us to do better.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

In 1913 St. John's held the first English worship service. Today we recognize how language changes our culture and honor the voices of our past and current faith community as we invoke the Spirit of God.

***INVOCATION**

We pray in Hebrew the language from which much of our scripture is translated

שמע ישראל יהוה אלהינו יהוה אחד:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is One.

We pray in Sanskrit, the language known by many of our Biblical heroes and heard in yoga classes today.

Om saha nāvavatu, saha nau bhunaktu, saha vīryam karavāvai.

May the Divine protect us, may the Divine nourish us, may we work together with great energy, and may our study be brilliant and effective.

Om Shanti, Shanti, Shanti.

Peace in body, peace in mind, and peace in spirit.

We pray in Spanish, the language of our neighbors and community members.

Cristo, el Verbo hecho carne, únete a nosotros en la adoración hoy. Amén.

Christ, the Word Made Flesh, join us in worship today. Amen.

***HYMN #22 "Sing Praise to God"**

pg. 21

Written in 1680 by Joachim Neander, a dedicated pastor of the Reformed Church in Germany, this familiar hymn was likely sung often by the founders of St. John's Evangelical Church, possibly even at its dedication service.

NEW MEMBER CEREMONY

Colleen R. McClory

Emily Olsen

HONORING FAITH JOURNEYS

We will also welcome Tristen Burke as a new member this year during his confirmation this Fall. Riker Serrano receiving a Bible.

YOUNG & YOUNG AT HEART TIME

***HISTORICAL HYMN “This is a Living Church”**

By Rev. Dr. Mark E. Yurs 5/7/85

To the tune “Crown him with Many Crowns”

**This is a living church
A place where God's alive
The Spirit's here, with us draw near
And for our God we'll strive
This is a living church
A house of song and prayer
Glad hymns of praise our voices raise
To celebrate God's care**

**This was our elders' church
A place of faith and love
Through prayer's great aid they
Knew that they'd
Gain hope from things above
This was our elders' church
And here they were assured
That all life's pain would once again
Find meaning in God's word**

**This is a waiting church
The future now is bright
God's promises, the Bible says
Shall bring us to new light
This is a hoping church
To Jesus we belong
God said it's so, In Christ we'll grow
In fellowship that's strong**

***ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF PARISH**

Translated from German prayer book “Evangelische Agenda”

Lord our God! With all our hearts, we offer You praise and thanksgiving for having gathered a congregation for Yourself in this place 125 years ago, and for granting it—within this house of God—a place of worship and edification: a place where Your glory dwells, where the voice of thanksgiving is heard, and where all Your wondrous works are proclaimed. We extol and praise You for having graciously sustained this congregation through every trial and storm, in accordance with Your great mercy, and for having caused it to grow and blessed it to this very day. We thank You, O Lord, for all the grace and benefits You have bestowed upon the congregation as a whole and upon its individual members. You have preserved the lampstand of Your precious Word in this place; You have not let Your people lack wholesome teaching, comfort, admonition, or discipline; through Your Holy Word and Sacraments, You have strengthened the weak, lifted up the weary, awakened the complacent, comforted the sorrowful and the tempted, and established the dying in the faith for a blessed victory. For all this, we offer You praise and adoration at this hour, proclaiming: Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name be honor and glory. Triune God and Lord! Turn your attention to the prayers of your people today and always and graciously hear our supplication. Remain with us and our descendants all the days until the end of the age, and help us by your grace so that, one day in your heavenly kingdom, we may offer you—together with your redeemed congregation—praise, honor, and worship from eternity to eternity. Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father who art in Heaven. Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in
Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our
debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the Kingdom
and power and the glory forever. Amen.

***GLORIA PATRI**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Colossians 2:6-7 NRSVUE

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue
to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the
faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

1 Corinthians 13:13 NRSVUE

And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the
greatest of these is love.

***HYMN #313 "Like a Tree Beside the Waters"** pg. 22
(Tune: Come, O Fount of Every Blessing)

SERMON "Celebrating Roots" Rev. Dr. Terrill Murff

SERVICE OF COMMUNION

BLESSING AND SHARING THE ELEMENTS

All are invited to participate in this Holy symbol of Communion.

*You are invited to eat the cracker as a sign of your own
personal faith and hold the cup to drink together as a sign of our
communion faith.*

SPECIAL MUSIC “Adagio”

*from 1st Concerto in B flat for bassoon by W.A. Mozart
Karsin Bader, bassoon*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

MOMENT FOR MISSION – Neighbors in Need

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

MUSICAL OFFERING “Sing Alleluia!”
Choir

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, through whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God, above ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.



***PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING**

***CLOSING HYMN #419 “Now Thank We All Our God”** *pg.23*

*We join with past, present and future generations in gratitude for
God's abiding presence and faithfulness!*

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION** “May You Run & Not Be Weary”
Choir

*(Please join us as we process out to the front church steps at
the close of worship to take a picture as a community. If you are
with a young-at-heart who might be distracted by a bouncy
house, we invite you to exit through the back of the sanctuary to
save the festival as a surprise.)*

Special Thanks

Thank you to the Anniversary Committee who put in so much time, treasure and talent to make this day special for the whole community!

Present and past Church Council members for the diligence in discerning God's will for the community and bringing us to this day with their love and leadership.

The special donors who adopted projects to make our space especially welcoming for this day.

Rev. Dr. Terrell Murf for bringing us the word today and the wider church representation present today.

Mary Albrecht, Jeanne Anderson, and our Choir for bringing the joy filled music to life and helping us lift our voices in praise with our beautiful organ.

Karsin Bader for sharing her talent on the bassoon.

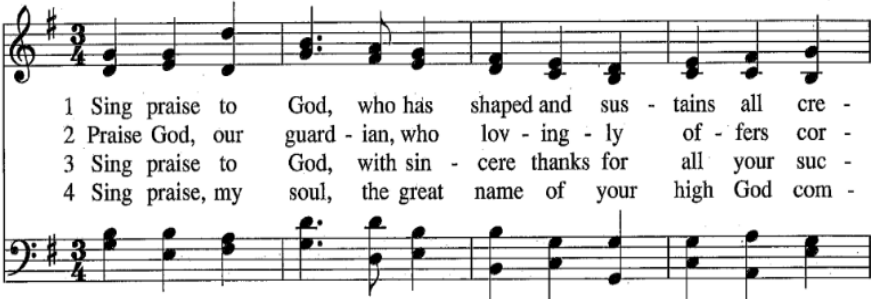
Mary Cooper for being today's official photographer.

Beth Carson, not only for leading the Anniversary Committee, but organizing the Luncheon and bringing in our Community Meal team with Barb Swick to cook for everyone.

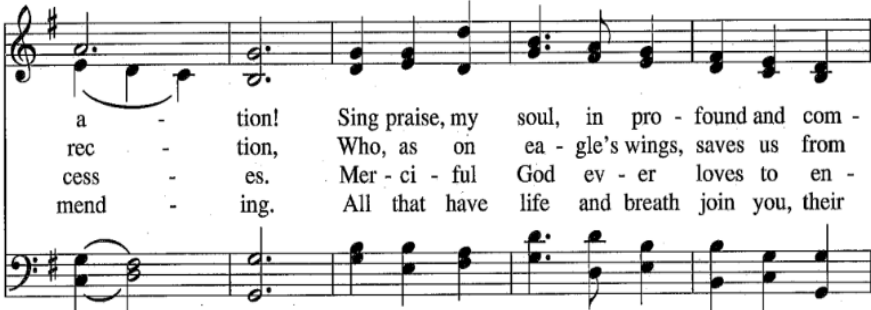
Donations for the Luncheon food were made by Trish Frazer in honor of her father, Rosie Frazer.

Valerie Skupien for providing cotton candy during our festival.

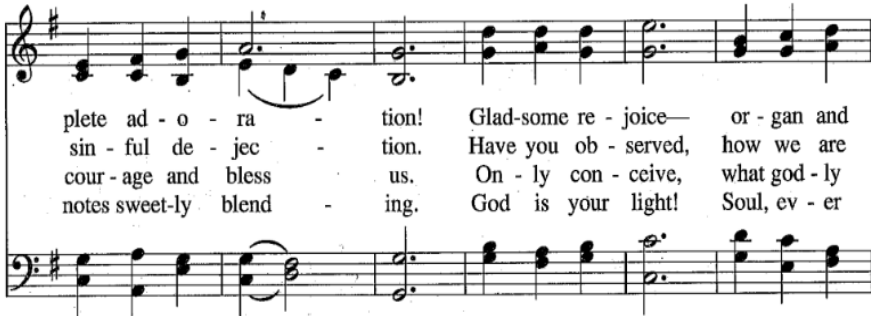
Nick Serrano for DJing during our festival.

Sing Praise to God


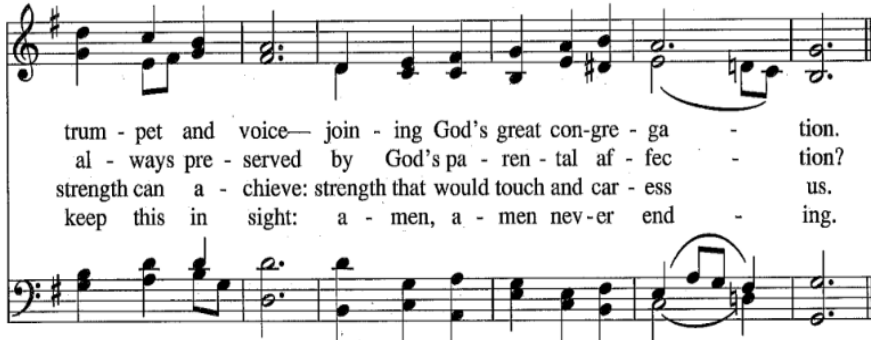
1 Sing praise to God, who has shaped and sus - tains all cre -
 2 Praise God, our guard - ian, who lov - ing - ly of - fers cor -
 3 Sing praise to God, with sin - cere thanks for all your suc -
 4 Sing praise, my soul, the great name of your high God com -



a - tion! Sing praise, my soul, in pro - found and com -
 rec - tion, Who, as on ea - gle's wings, saves us from
 cess - es. Mer - ci - ful God ev - er loves to en -
 mend - ing. All that have life and breath join you, their



plete ad - o - ra - tion! Glad - some re - joice — or - gan and
 sin - ful de - jec - tion. Have you ob - served, how we are
 cour - age and bless us. On - ly con - ceive, what god - ly
 notes sweet - ly blend - ing. God is your light! Soul, ev - er



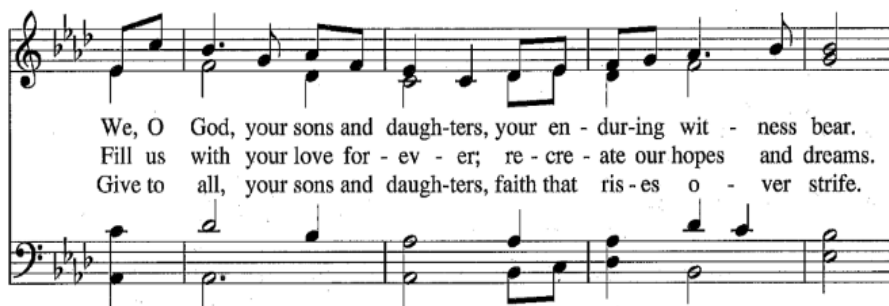
trum - pet and voice — join - ing God's great con - gre - ga - tion.
 al - ways pre - served by God's pa - ren - tal af - fec - tion?
 strength can a - chieve: strength that would touch and car - ess us.
 keep this in sight: a - men, a - men nev - er end - ing.

Like a Tree Beside the Waters

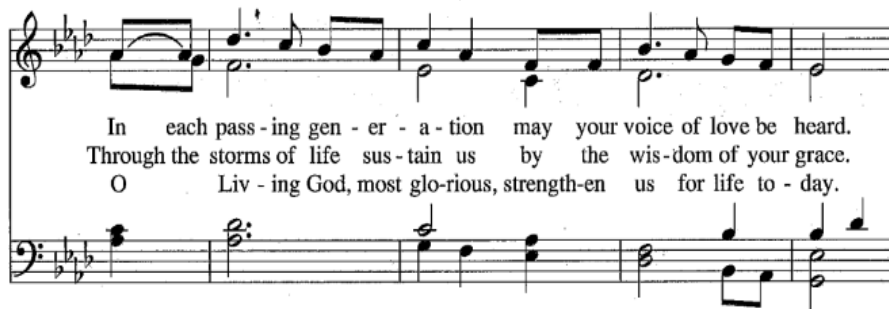
UNISON



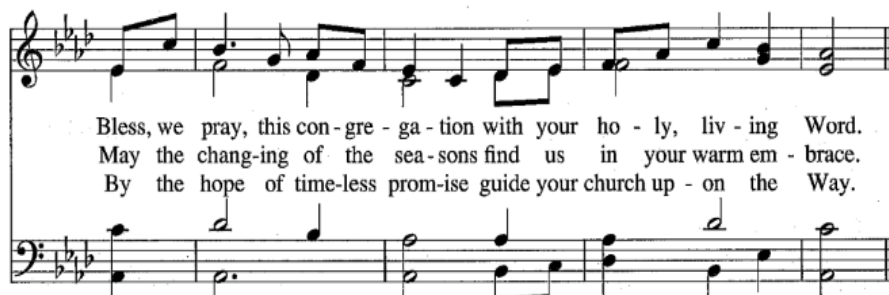
1 Like a tree be-side the wa-ters, nur-tured by your lov-ing care,
 2 Like a tree be-side the riv-er, draw-ing life from ho-ly streams,
 3 We, be-side the liv-ing wa-ters, drink from your e-ter-nal life.



We, O God, your sons and daugh-ters, your en-dur-ing wit-ness bear.
 Fill us with your love for-ev-er; re-cre-ate our hopes and dreams.
 Give to all, your sons and daugh-ters, faith that ris-es o-ver strife.



In each pass-ing gen-er-a-tion may your voice of love be heard.
 Through the storms of life sus-tain us by the wis-dom of your grace.
 O Liv-ing God, most glo-rious, strength-en us for life to-day.



Bless, we pray, this con-gre-ga-tion with your ho-ly, liv-ing Word.
 May the chang-ing of the sea-sons find us in your warm em-brace.
 By the hope of time-less prom-ise guide your church up-on the Way.

Now Thank We All Our God

1 Nun dank - et al - le Gott, mit Herz - en, Mund und Händ - en,
 1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voic - es,
 2 O may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God our Mak - er now be giv - en,

der gro - sse Ding - e tut an uns und al - len End - en;
 Who won - drous things has done, in whom this world re - joic - es,
 With ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
 To Christ, and Spir - it, too, our help in high - est heav - en,

der uns von Mut - ter - leib und Kind - es - bein - en an
 Who, from our par - ents' arms, has blessed us on our way
 And keep us still in grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
 The one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heaven a - dore,

un - zäh - lig viel zu gut bis hier-her hat ge - tan.
 With count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
 And free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 For thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

St. John's United Church of Christ

P.O. Box 794, 401 N Main Street, Belvidere, IL 61008

stjohns401.org

stjohnsucc401@gmail.com

STAFF

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815-979-0473

Minister of Music: Mary Albrecht

224-234-7749

Choir Director: Jeanne Anderson

815-985-2652

Nursery Attendant: Hanna Jarvis

815-914-4718

2026 CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator: Dawn Snow

815-558-9440 | da76isy@gmail.com

Vice Moderator: Heather Johnson

815-912-2921 | johnson.heather226@gmail.com

Memorial Trustee: Gary Reding

815-623-8931 | gdreding7@gmail.com

Memorial Trustee, Jr: Paul Mollway

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Sexton: Betsy Mollway

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Sexton, Jr.: Michael Scott

815-516-6734 | michaelscott1985@gmail.com

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Treasurer: Lettie Thurman

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