

St. John United Church of Christ
Arlington Heights, Illinois



The Ethiopian and Philip – the Angel's Chapel, Seckau Abbey, Styria, Austria

Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 2, 2021

Welcome to St. John

Welcome back! Thank you for joining us for in-person worship today. We're so glad that everyone can gather safely in the sanctuary. Here are some things to remember: 1. Masks are required. 2. Please practice social distancing. 3. There should be three chairs in between you and the next person in your row.

Safety & Cleaning We are taking the pandemic and virus spread seriously and want you to know that after every worship service we are using an electrostatic sprayer with safe and environmentally-friendly disinfectant to clean.

Livestreaming All of St. John's worship services are now livestreamed. You can watch the service live or at another time by going to our website, www.stjah.org or our Vimeo page, www.vimeo.com/stjah.

Holy Communion All are welcome to participate in Holy Communion at St. John. We believe that Jesus welcomed all to his mission of love and all are welcome to the table. Individual Communion cups are available when you pick up a bulletin on Communion Sundays, which are the first and third Sundays of the month. There is a thin layer covering the wafer and the purple lid can then be opened for the grape juice. All of the Communion cups are grape juice. **A gluten-free option is available upon request.**

Giving Offering plates will be located at the entrance to the sanctuary. We will not collect offering by passing the plates due to the COVID-19. You can also give by 1. going to www.stjah.org and click the "GIVE" tab at the top of the page, or by mail. Thank you for your generosity!

Children in Worship Infants and children bring life to our worship and are always welcome. Worship Activity Packets for children are available for children. St. John's leadership is in discussions about beginning Sunday School and other children's and youth ministries again in the future.

Interested in Membership? Contact Pastor Michael at mjones@stjah.org or 847-255-6687.

Open and Affirming We are an ONA church. Please visit our website and see our ONA Statement on the back page of this bulletin for more information.

CONTACT US –

308 N. Evergreen Avenue, Arlington Heights, IL 60004

www.stjah.org | office@stjah.org

facebook.com/stjohnuccah | twitter.com/stjohnuccah | instagram.com/stjohnucc

Office: 847.255.6687

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

STAFF –

Rev. Michael D. Jones, Pastor – mjones@stjah.org

Janice Gilligan, Church Administrator – office@stjah.org

Dr. J. Paul Cochran, Organist

Linda Styzek, Pianist

Alberto Mantovano, Choir Director

Carin Zachar, Bell Choir Director

Fifth Sunday of Easter / May 2, 2021

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETING AND WELCOME

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF GATHERING

Cultivating God, we come as your children to grow and learn, because you are our divine vine grower. God, we desire for you to abide within us, and for your grace to be revealed anew daily. As your branches, we ask you to nourish us for continued growth. May you transform our hearts and minds as we hear your Word, sing your praises, and engage in holy dialogue through prayer.

May you help us to bear good fruit through the vine of Jesus Christ. In Whose name we pray, Amen.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

As we gather, may we open our hearts to receive newness of life.

We come with hope for renewal.

In our time of worship, may we be inspired by God's wisdom.

We come seeking to learn and to draw closer to God.

Come, let us worship, as the beloved children of God.

*OPENING HYMN #4

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

O God, giver of life, We confess the times when we fail to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. God, forgive us when we ignore or we fail to see our neighbors in need. Abiding God, also forgive us when we reject love from others, and shut down completely. As we confess the times when we did not tend to our own needs, and denied ourselves of your forgiveness and grace. In our failures, we have refused your invitation to grow closer to you.

In our confession, O God, we pray your abiding love be shown through the ways we love more fully. Amen.

*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*THE PEACE [*Please simply say "Peace be with you" with a nod or wave.*]

The peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

Halle, halle, halleluja.

FIRST NEW TESTAMENT READING

Acts 8:26-40

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.'

The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

SECOND NEW TESTAMENT READING

1 John 4:7-21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, 'I love God', and hate their brothers

or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

This Little Light of Mine – Arr. Joel Raney

GOSPEL

John 15:1-8

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

RESPONSE #765

Alleluia

SERMON

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed by Charles Allen

I awaken trustfully to God, all-embracing Love, ever-present yet incomprehensible, from whom, through whom and in whom all things are.

I awaken trustfully to the one light enlightening everyone, personally embodied in following Jesus as the Christ, whose full humanity originates with the very life of God.

He was executed by the powers that be, sharing death and rejection faced by us all. But neither death nor rejection could end or contain the common life Jesus began.

This self-giving life is again one with God's life.

Much more is to come beyond this story, yet again and again all past and present lives are weighed and renewed in this self-giving common life.

I awaken trustfully to the moving of God's Spirit, the holiness of sharing God's common life with all, God's unconditional embrace, and the receiving of every moment into the boundless life of God. Let it be. Amen.

SONG

O Happy Day

CCLI Song # 4847027 Ben Cantelon | Tim Hughes © 2006 Thankyou Music (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
For use solely with the SongSelect® [Terms of Use](#). All rights reserved. www.ccli.com CCLI License # 3266027

COMMUNITY PRAYER

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Beautiful Savior — Dale Wood

*DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from 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

HOLY COMMUNION

Christ is Risen! / **Christ is risen indeed!**
Lift up your hearts. / **We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Creator, Redeemer, and Holy Spirit...
...As we proclaim the glory of your name, we sing:

SANCTUS #793

**Holy, holy, holy, my heart, my heart adores you!
My heart is glad to say the words: you are holy, God.**

THE 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 the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN #393

Blessed Be the Tie That Binds

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Someone's Singing, Lord — John Behnke

*Indicates when congregation may stand.

Hymns reproduced with permission under Christian Copyright Licensing International, license #3266027.

St. John UCC

CCLI Copyright License 3266027

CCLI Streaming License 20171680

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE

License #A-731362. All rights reserved.

This Sunday's Worship Leaders: GREETERS: Lana Cochran, Judy Grimes & Holly Petersen. BULLETIN SPONSOR: None. FLOWERS: Barbara Ahrenholz. SCRIPTURE READER: Judy Grimes. CALLED TO CARE: Barbara Blye. SEXTON: Frank Styzek. ALTAR GUILD: Molly Tashima & Janet Landeweer.

Next Sunday's Worship Leaders: GREETERS: Paul Giambarberee & Dennis Roesslein. BULLETIN SPONSOR: None. FLOWERS: None. SCRIPTURE READER: Kevin Daly. CALLED TO CARE: Holly Endicott. SEXTON: Frank Styzek. ALTAR GUILD: Molly Tashima & Janet Landeweer.

GIVING to St. John

Thank you for your continued financial support of St. John. There are two ways to give to St. John during this time of not being in-person for worship:

1. Giving Online: Go to www.stjah.org and click the "GIVE" tab at the top of the page. Once on the Give page, click on "DONATE NOW." Consider signing up for recurring giving. It makes it easy and helps the church plan.
2. Give by mail: Mail your gift to St. John UCC, 308 N. Evergreen Ave., Arlington Heights, IL 60004.

The Week Ahead at St. John

If you would like to join any committee meetings, please contact the office. Zoom info for virtual meetings is sent in the This Week announcement email every week. If you'd like to receive that email, please contact the church office.

Sunday Communion Worship

Sunday, May 2, at 10:00 A.M.
St. John Sanctuary & Streaming Live!

St. John Virtual Coffee Hour (Zoom)

Sunday, May 2, at 11:15 A.M.

Bible Study with Pastor Michael (Zoom)

Tuesday, May 4, at 10:00 A.M.

Confirmation Class (Zoom)

Tuesday, May 4, at 6:00 P.M.

Conversations on Race (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 5, at 7:00 P.M.

Spiritual Life Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 5, at 7:00 P.M.

Capital Campaign Steering Committee Meeting (Zoom)

Thursday, May 6, at 7:00 P.M.

St. John UCC Reopening Guidelines

St. John is now open indoor, in-person worship on Sundays at 10:00 A.M.

Please sign up by:

1. Clicking the sign-up link provided in the weekly email sent out in announcements.
2. Emailing the church office (office@stjah.org).
3. Calling the church office (847-255-6687).

(Please try to sign up early to help with planning).

We follow CDC & state guidelines regarding the number of people who can attend in-person in-door worship. If more people sign up than what the CDC & state guidelines indicate, we will consider offering 2 worship services.

Please do not arrive before 9:30 A.M.

Chairs will be provided.

Masks & social distancing are required.

Attendees may enter at either entrance.

If you have any symptoms, have been in close contact with someone with COVID within the last 14 days, or have been tested for COVID and are waiting for results, we ask that you watch worship from home.

After worship: We will not be holding Coffee Hour but as the weather warms, outdoor gathering will be an option.



Class of 2021 Graduation Sunday

Graduation Sunday: St. John is celebrating its graduates on Sunday, June 6! We recognize high school, college, graduate/professional school, and other certificate programs. Graduates are welcome to attend the worship service to be recognized but we understand if families are not attending in-person at this time. Their names will be read and information included in the bulletin that Sunday whether they plan to attend in person or not.

Families/Graduates, please submit the following information to office@stjah.org:

1. Send a picture.
2. Send the graduate's name, what degree or certificate they are receiving, and what their future plans are.
3. Let us know if you're attending in person on June 6 or not.

The deadline for submission is Sunday, May 30.

Buffalo Grove Pride Drive

St. John is sponsoring a home for this year's Buffalo Grove Pride Drive, taking place on June 6 from 12-3pm. If you're interested in helping create décor prior to the event, or setting up / tearing down on the day of, please reach out to Jenn Borrell at jborrell@hotmail.com or 773-964-3455.

Food Pantry Donations

St. John continues to support the Lutheran Church of the Cross food pantry. Please bring your donations to church on Sundays or at another time and they will be delivered. Collection baskets will be available in the narthex.

Church Flowers

St. John will once again purchase flowers for Sunday worship. If you would like to be a flower sponsor, please call the office. The cost of the flowers is \$40 per week.

Amazon Smile

Looking for a way to support St. John? When you shop at Amazon, please shop at [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible AmazonSmile purchases to St. John, at no cost to you. Simply create an account on the [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) site and select St. John United Church of Christ as the charitable organization.

Mission Moments

May 2, 2021

Fifth Sunday of Easter

John 15:1-8

Abiding in Love

While today retired pastor Rev. Dr. Ron Patterson lives comfortably with his wife Charnley Marsden in Tacoma, Washington, his early life in Akron, OH was much more humble. Unsure of his life's direction, Ron met with his pastor, who encouraged the high schooler to enroll at Heidelberg College.

"My parents don't have the money for that," Ron told his minister. But endowment funds from both Grace UCC in Akron and Heidelberg College (now University) made college possible for Ron – as well as a long and successful career in ministry.

And he remains eternally grateful for such great generosity from people he never knew.

"All because of the endowments people like me, who had nothing, could go to college and seminary. That's why I've left a planned gift to the UCC. So much of what the UCC was able to do for justice and work in the world was because of our endowments at churches, camps, Conferences, and the National Setting," Ron continued.

"The UCC has something to say and to share, and the financial part is not the most important part but sure makes the other parts possible in so many ways. We need to be a place where prophets like Traci Blackmon can stand, and voices like Karen Georgia Thompson's can be heard."

To learn more about giving to the UCC, please contact Generosity Officer Andy DeBraber at debrabera@ucc.org or 216.736.2168 or Generosity Officer Jessica Shine at shinej@ucc.org or (216) 736.2175.



**Let's make this Mother's Day special for moms in need.
We are collecting for Sue's Pantry.**

Sue's Pantry serves over 200 families a week, providing food and necessities.
Collecting Items until Thursday, May 6th

Full-size items needed:

Hand & Body Lotion
Body Wash & Spray
Hair Spray
Shampoo & Conditioner
Brushes & Combs
Ladies' Hygiene Products
Ladies' Deodorant
Nail Polish
Lipstick
Gift Certificates

Drop off your donations at church or call the office to have someone pick up your donations.

Below is a Target wish list link:

https://www.target.com/gift-registry/giftgiver?registryId=2638976198b54d5d900bb0828878a394&fbclid=IwAR39d53nYoxTL0ZBZYUAKzHHIZMLgXI6OhpVnGwy-W-KCWPU4yATvmhCOdE&lnk=registry_custom_url

No act of kindness is too small.

ST. JOHN UCC OPEN & AFFIRMING STATEMENT



The congregation of St. John United Church of Christ rejoices that our community of faith is strengthened by diversity. We declare ourselves to be an open and affirming congregation, extending God's extravagant welcome to all people regardless of culture, economic status, age, sex, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, marital status, or physical/mental condition. We invite everyone to join our journey of faith and participate fully in the life of our congregation.



ST. JOHN
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
www.stjah.org