

**St. John United Church of Christ**  
Arlington Heights, Illinois



**The Rite of Confirmation**

**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
September 17, 2023

# Welcome to St. John

**Welcome** Thank you for joining us for in-person worship today!

**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](http://www.stjah.org) or our Vimeo page, [www.vimeo.com/stjah](http://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. We celebrate Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month. All are invited to come forward, row by row. If you cannot come forward, a server will bring communion to you.

**A gluten-free option is available.** White Grape Juice or Red Wine are available in the trays.

**Giving** Offering plates are passed during worship. You can also give by going to [www.stjah.org](http://www.stjah.org) and clicking 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 are available for children.

**Interested in Membership?** Contact the office at [office@stjah.org](mailto:office@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.

**Wifi Network & Password** Guest & StJohnGuest

## CONTACT US –

308 N. Evergreen Avenue, Arlington Heights, IL 60004

[www.stjah.org](http://www.stjah.org) | [office@stjah.org](mailto:office@stjah.org)

[facebook.com/stjohnuccah](https://facebook.com/stjohnuccah) | [twitter.com/stjohnuccah](https://twitter.com/stjohnuccah) | [instagram.com/stjohnuccah](https://instagram.com/stjohnuccah)

Office: 847.255.6687

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

## STAFF –

Rev. Judith Wang, Interim Pastor – [pastor@stjah.org](mailto:pastor@stjah.org)

Janice Gilligan, Church Administrator – [office@stjah.org](mailto:office@stjah.org)

Dr. J. Paul Cochran, Organist & Orchestra Director

Linda Styzek, Pianist & Worship Band Coordinator

Alberto Mantovano, Choir Director & Livestream Coordinator

Carin Zachar, Bell Choir Director

*September 17, 2023*

Please silence all phones and electronic devices. Thank you.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

In this holy ordinary place,  
with these holy ordinary people,

**God appears.**

In this holy ordinary time,  
in this holy ordinary life,

**God is doing amazing, unexpected things.**

In our holy ordinary hospitality,  
in our holy ordinary laughter,

**God catches us unawares,  
and provides the impossible.**

\*OPENING HYMN #32

“God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale”

\*OPENING PRAYER (Unison)

**God of promises and surprises, we cannot imagine what you have in mind,  
we can only trust that you remember us, you take note of your world and  
its needs and longings, and you will fulfill your promise.**

**As you appeared to Abraham and Sarah bearing a message they could  
hardly believe, appear to us again this day and make us ready to receive.  
We pray in your holy name...**

\*OUR LORD’S PRAYER (Unison)

**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.**

\*PRAYER RESPONSE #769

**Hear our prayer, O God; hear our prayer, O God.  
Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.**

\*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!**

## HISTORICAL WITNESS

Genesis 18.1-15, 21.1-3

<sup>1</sup>8The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. <sup>3</sup>He said, 'My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. <sup>5</sup>Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.' So they said, 'Do as you have said.' <sup>6</sup>And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, 'Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.' <sup>7</sup>Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. <sup>8</sup>Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. <sup>9</sup>They said to him, 'Where is your wife Sarah?' And he said, 'There, in the tent.' <sup>10</sup>Then one said, 'I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.' And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. <sup>11</sup>Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. <sup>12</sup>So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, 'After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?' <sup>13</sup>The Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, and say, "Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?"' <sup>14</sup>Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.' <sup>15</sup>But Sarah denied, saying, 'I did not laugh'; for she was afraid. He said, 'Oh yes, you did laugh.' <sup>21</sup>The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. <sup>2</sup>Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. <sup>3</sup>Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him.

## FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS COLLECTION

## TIME WITH CHILDREN

MUSICAL OFFERING – Choir

Seek Ye the Lord – Benjamin Harlan

CONTEMPORARY WITNESS

“L.O.L.”

## TIME OF PRAYER

## INVITATION TO OFFERING AND OFFERTORY

Jesus, Still Lead On – David Cherwien

\*DOXOLOGY

Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN (#17)

**Praise God from Whom all blessings flow  
Praise God all creatures here below  
Alleluia, alleluia  
Praise God the source of all our gifts  
Praise Jesus Christ Whose power uplifts  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit  
Alleluia, alleluia,  
Alleluia**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

See Insert

\*CLOSING HYMN #351

“I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry”

\*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Praise and Thanksgiving – Dale Wood

\*Indicates when congregation may stand.

The Call to Worship and Opening Prayer are written by the Rev. Teri Peterson for Bible Worm.

**Bolded text** is intended to be read in unison by the whole congregation.

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This Sunday's Worship Leaders: GREETERS: Dave Landeweer & Dennis Roesslein.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dave Landeweer. FLOWERS:. COFFEE: Christian Education. SCRIPTURE READER: Natalie Burkhardt. CALLED TO CARE: Corrie Roesslein. SEXTON: Paul Giambarberee. ALTAR GUILD: Lana Cochran.

Next Sunday's Worship Leaders: GREETERS: Judy Grimes & Dennis Roesslein.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Dennis Roesslein. FLOWERS:. COFFEE:. SCRIPTURE READER: Lana Cochran. CALLED TO CARE:. SEXTON: Paul Giambarberee. ALTAR GUILD: Lana Cochran.

The Week Ahead at St. John

- **Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost / Confirmation Sunday** – Sunday, September 17 at 10:00 A.M.
  - **Coffee Hour** - Sunday, September 17 at 11:00 A.M.
  - **Bible Study** - Tuesday, September 19 at 10:00 A.M.
  - **Worship Band** - Tuesday, September 19 at 6:30 P.M.
  - **Stewardship Meeting** - Tuesday, September 19 at 7:00 P.M.
  - **Choir Rehearsal** - Wednesday, September 20 at 6:45 P.M.
  - **PADS Training** - Wednesday, September 20 at 7:00 P.M.
  - **Cards** - Thursday, September 21 at 1:00 P.M.
  - **Visitation & Service for Dorothy Esmail** – Friday, September 22 at 9:30 A.M.
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**Save the Dates: Sunday School will begin today!**

**Wednesday, September 27th, 5-8 pm - Community Open House** to celebrate the completion of the Capital Campaign work.

**Bible Study:** Bible Study has resumed on Tuesday mornings at 10:00 AM. We are discussing the Book of James.

**Race Discussion Group:** The Race Discussion Group will meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month beginning October 2nd. We meet via Zoom from 7-8pm. Our book for the fall and winter is Mindful of Race, Transforming Racism from the Inside Out by Ruth King. We will read the Introduction and Chapter 1 for the October 2nd meeting. If you are interested in joining this conversation, please

let either Martha or Tom Mockaitis know, and you'll be added to the Zoom Link. This group is a gathering of people from St. John's and Temple Beth Am. We are happy to have new folks join us as we learn and discuss topics and issues on racism today.

**PADS Update:** Welcome back for the 23/24 PADS Season! We are eagerly preparing for our PADS season at St. John. We will again be open on Wednesday and Friday evenings to serve the PADS guests. Our first nights will be Wednesday, October 4th and Friday, October 6th.

Journeys is hoping to have 2 sites open every night of the week this season. St. James will also be open on Wednesday nights. Typically the number of guests is lower in October and November, so we will be alternating weeks with St. James. As numbers of guests increase, we will open both sites each week. We are currently the only site scheduled to open on Fridays.

We are looking for volunteers for all shifts on Wednesday / Thursday and Friday / Saturday. We particularly need volunteers for second and third shifts! We will provide training for all shifts! We also need food donations to provide dinner, breakfast and lunch for our guests!

6:30pm - 7:00pm - Set-up Shift

10:45pm - 3:00am - Second Shift

6:30pm - 11:00pm - First Shift

2:45am - 7:00am - Third Shift

6:30pm - 9:00pm - First Shift

7:00am - 8:30am - Clean-up Shift

6:30pm - 9:00pm - Meal Servers

Please see the Sign-ups below! Mark what you are interested in and then hit submit! You can mark multiple items at once. If you would like assistance with Sign-up genius, we are glad to help!

There will be **Volunteer Training at St. John on Wednesday, September 20th from 7:00pm - 8:00pm. THIS IS A DATE CHANGE.** We ask that all returning and new volunteers attend, if possible, as our spaces have changed this year. If you are unable to attend, we would be glad to set up another time to tour the new spaces. We welcome anyone who is interested in joining our team and would like more information about our program.

New and returning volunteers who have not already completed it are required to complete a brief on-line training provided by Journeys The Road Home. At the end of training, volunteers will complete the form for a background check and a volunteer information sheet. All 3 steps must be completed. <https://www.journeystheroadhome.org/VolunteerOrientation.html>

**Wednesday Shifts Sign-up:**

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-pads1#/  
/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-pads1#/)

**Wednesday Food/Meal Servers Sign-up:**

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-202320241#/  
/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-202320241#/)

**Friday Shifts Sign-up:**

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-pads2#/  
/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-pads2#/)

**Friday Food/meal Servers Sign-up:**

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-202320242#/  
/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e45adaa28a7f4ce9-202320242#/)

Please reach out to any team member with questions!

Thanks so much for all of your support!

The St. John PADS Team

St. John Site Directors:

Kathy Winters ([kwinters7@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:kwinters7@sbcbglobal.net), 847-997-4152)

Michelle Johns ([mmjohn03@yahoo.com](mailto:mmjohn03@yahoo.com), 630-606-9891)

Dev Mahadev ([mhadevsm@gmail.com](mailto:mhadevsm@gmail.com), 281-433-2587)

Kitchen Coordinators:

Barbara Jo Scott ([bjtom@mac.com](mailto:bjtom@mac.com), 847-302-1099)

Kathy Gannon ([kathylynngannon@gmail.com](mailto:kathylynngannon@gmail.com), 847-361-6850)

**St. John Social:** Members and guests of our St. John community meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 6:00 pm for a potluck dinner and social gathering.

- October 14th join us for **German Fest**.
- November 11th join us for a **Hawaiian Thanksgiving**.
- December 9th join us for the **12 “Dishes” of Christmas**.

Be as creative or traditional as you like. It is always fun to see what people bring to share. Hope to see you and remember all are welcome!

**St. John Book Club:** We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month at 2:00 pm at St. John. On September 11th, we will discuss The Only Woman in the Room by Marie Benedict. On October 9th, we will discuss the One Book One Village selection: The Two Lives of Sara by Catherine Adel West. On November 13th, we will discuss Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Pelt. On December 11th, we will share a recent or old favorite holiday theme book/tradition of our choice.

**Little Free Pantry:** Don't forget about our Little Free Pantry. We are currently collecting athletic socks, sunscreen, deodorant and soap/body wipes. Sign up to help for a 2-week commitment at <https://tinyurl.com/2uzc4tdf>. Contact Jay Virchow or Jenn Borrell with questions.

**Food Pantry Focus:** The Lutheran Church of the Cross Food Pantry is thankful for our weekly donations. The following items are needed: 9/17 – White rice, 1-2 bags or boxes; 9/24 – Pasta 1 lb. packages (not lasagna); 10/1 – Canned soup; 10/8 – Canned chicken and tuna; 10/15 – Canned fruit; 10/22 – Canned SpaghettiO's and ravioli, etc.; 10/29 – Peanut butter, 16-28 oz. max. Thanks, Connie & Mission Team

**Giving Hope:** Registration is now open for FamilyForward's annual fundraiser, **Giving Hope**, this year with an Oktoberfest theme. Please plan to attend as FamilyForward celebrates its 20th anniversary in support of low-income, working families across the northwest suburbs as they move toward financial stability and independence. The event will be held on Sunday, October 15th, from noon-2:30pm at Chevy Chase Country Club, 1000 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Wheeling.

Event highlights include: Gourmet lunch buffet with vegetarian options; Cash bar including German beer selections; Silent auctions and raffles; Entertainment by Die Musikmeisters Band (Oompah!); Family story and live appeal; Special Giving Hope:Oktoberfest gift & more!

Visit [family-forward.org/giving-hope](http://family-forward.org/giving-hope) to register for this major event in support of hard-working families that need our help to overcome financial challenges. Questions? Contact FamilyForward board members Paul Cochran or Tim Wayman. Hope to see you there!

Even if you have not spent much time in church or in Bible study, the story of the crossing of the Red Sea is probably a little familiar. Take a look at the story with new eyes today, reading it through a lens that is new to you. What new message or insight do you get from this story by reading it in this new way?

A **literary** reading considers the story from the point of view of literature. How does the plot arc and flow keep you, as the reader or listener, engaged? What are some of the literary devices, such as use of language? Who are the characters and how are they developed? What is your point of view as a reader or listener? How does the story change if you consider it from another point of view?

A **historical** reading considers the story from the point of view of its place in history. Take into account the place and time that the story takes place. What is the culture of God's people and of Pharaoh's people at the time? What are other forces at work in these societies?

Another way to read a Bible story is as a story of **God's work in the world**. In reading this way, pay attention to where God is and what God is doing. What is God like in this story and how does this compare to God's presence in other stories? How does God look and sound? In what ways does God circumvent expected or natural law in order to accomplish Divine goals?

You may also want to read a scripture story **devotionally**, as a way to intentionally deepen your walk with God. In reading this way, read the story slowly three times. The first time, pay attention to any words or phrases that jump out at you and make note of them. The second time, read while asking God to show you God's purpose in the world. The third time, read asking God to reveal something that you need for your own particular faith walk.

Yet another way to read the Bible, and perhaps a particularly helpful one on this Just Peace Sunday (<https://www.ucc.org/just-peace/>), is through a **liberation theology** lens. Liberation theology is based on the fundamental value that God's preference is always for the marginalized and oppressed. As you read this way, look for clues that God is working for freedom for the enslaved, and disruption of systems of oppression.



[www.stjah.org](http://www.stjah.org)

**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.