

# UNITED CHURCH ON THE GREEN

In the Heart of New Haven, open to all Seekers



An Open and Affirming Congregation of the  
United Church of Christ

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In a world where Christianity is too often associated with intolerance, exclusion, and hate, the mission of United Church on the Green is to proclaim Christ through faith, hope, and love. We are a community of many races, ethnic backgrounds, religious experiences, ages, sexual orientations, and gender identities. No matter where you are on your journey of faith, you will have a home here at United Church on the Green.

**We Gather as Church**

**PRELUDE**

*A Paraphrase of "St. Elizabeth"*

Gerre Hancock

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Peace be with you... **And also with you...**

One: The Lord is Risen!

People: ***We come to our God with praise!***

One: We come to celebrate victory of Life over every power of death

People: ***We come to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ***

One: We come to celebrate the victory of Hope over despair

People: ***We come to proclaim New Life for all!***

One: We celebrate you our Risen Lord as you bring glad tidings that our God has place for us all in eternity

People: ***We come to our God with hope***

One: We give thanks that your ministry of hope and healing for all, particularly the last and least, has found vindication

***ALL: We give thanks that you, Jesus Christ have given unto us this ministry and will walk in joy and hope this day and forever more!***

\*Please stand as you are able

**\*HYMN #224**    *Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart*    MORECAMBE

1. Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart;  
 2. I ask no dream, no proph - et ec - sta - sies,  
 3. Teach me to feel that thou art al - ways nigh;  
 4. Teach me to love thee as thine an - gels love,

wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move;  
 no sud - den rend - ing of the veil of clay,  
 teach me the strug - gles of the soul to bear;  
 one ho - ly pas - sion fill - ing all my frame;

stoop to my weak - ness, might - y as thou art,  
 no an - gel vis - it - ant, no o - pening skies,  
 to check the ris - ing doubt, the reb - el sigh;  
 the bap - tism of the heaven - de - scend - ed Dove.

and make me love thee as I ought to love.  
 but take the dim - ness of my soul a - way.  
 teach me the pa - tience of un - an - swered prayer.  
 My heart an al - tar, and thy love the flame.

\*Please stand as you are able

## **GATHERING PRAYER (Unison)**

**We give thanks to you, Oh God, for you are good; for your steadfast love endures forever. You have redeemed us from trouble and gathered us in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. When we cry to you in trouble, you bring us out of our distress.**

**We thank you God for your steadfast love, for your wonderful works to humankind. We lift up your name here in the congregation of the people and praise you in the assembly of the elders. We worship you here, today, together. Amen.**

## **CHILDREN'S GATHERING**

*Rev. Ray invites all children to the playground for a brief time of greetings and prayer. After which children are invited to join teacher Rebecca Baisden in the children's room downstairs for a time of structured play or to stay in the pew with their parents.*

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Holy God, you cause rain to fall on the just and unjust. Sometimes we are part of the just, and sometimes we are part of the unjust. You have given us incredible gifts of soil, water, and air that sustain our entire lives. When we are ungrateful, forgive us. When we forget to take care of those resources, forgive us. When we hoard these resources and keep them from others who need them, forgive us. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us to refresh us and renew us so that we can use the gifts you have given us to care for each other and our earth. Amen.**

### **Brief period of silence**

\*Please stand as you are able

Loving God, you restore us to each other and to you, mending our hearts and repairing the world. Through the power of your Spirit, you shape us to be for others what Christ is for us: pardon and peace, new life and blessing. We give you thanks for your love, forgiveness, and constant presence. Amen.

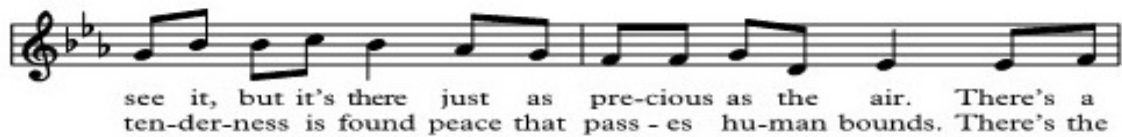
HYMN RESPONSE *There's A Spirit of Love in This Place* MEDEMA



1. There's a spir - it of love in this place, there's a  
 (2. There's the) pres - ence of peace in this room, there's the



spir - it of love in this place. You can't  
 pres - ence of peace in this room. In God's



see it, but it's there just as pre-cious as the air. There's a  
 ten-der-ness is found peace that pass - es hu-man bounds. There's the



spir - it of love in this place. O al - le -  
 pres - ence of peace in this room.



lu - ia, sing al - le - lu - ia! We bless your ho - ly



name. O al - le - lu - ia, sing al - le - lu - ia! There's a



spir - it of love in this place. 1. There's the place. 2. There's the place.

\*Please stand as you are able

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

One: With calming words, with a peaceful Spirit, with overflowing love and hope, our God forgives us and fills us with faith.

**Many: Our God affirms us for who we are— those whose brokenness is made whole, whose sin is forgiven, whose lives overflow with faith. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### **We Listen for God's Word**

#### **SCRIPTURE**

1 John 4:7-21

Cher Balkcom

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

<sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us.

<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. <sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> We love <sup>[a]</sup> because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> Those who say, "I love God," and hate a brother or sister are liars, for those who do not love a brother or sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup> The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

\*Please stand as you are able

**\*HYMN #426**

*I've Got Peace Like a River*

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

1. I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a  
2. I've got joy like a foun-tain, I've got joy like a  
3. I've got love like an o - cean, I've got love like an  
4. I've got faith like an an - chor, I've got faith like an

1.  
riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er, in - a my  
foun-tain, I've got joy like a foun-tain, in - a my  
o - cean, I've got love like an o - cean, in - a my  
an - chor, I've got faith like an an - chor, in - a my

2.  
soul. I've got riv - er in - a my soul.  
soul. I've got foun-tain in - a my soul.  
soul. I've got o - cean in - a my soul.  
soul. I've got an-chor in - a my soul.

**REFLECTION**

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr.

\*Please stand as you are able



## **ANTHEM**

*Like as the Hart*

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Like as the hart desireth the waterbrooks,  
so longeth my soul after Thee, O God.  
Why art thou so full of heaviness, O my soul,  
and why art thou so disquieted within me?  
O put thy trust in God.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

The Lord be with you... *And also with you...* Let us pray...

**We join our voices to pray and rejoice to celebrate the good things of our life together and those who are celebrating their birthdays this week, including: Peter O'Connell.**

**We lift our voices and pray for the innocent who suffer in Gaza and Israel**

**We pray the young people on campuses around our nation whose cries for justice rekindle anew the call of conscience**

**We pray for our kin suffering under the many systems of oppression**

**We open our hearts to all those whose suffering of the ravages of Climate Change is magnified by these systems**

**We pray that all of this world's peoples might know peace**

**We pray for immigrants and refugees seeking sanctuary and safe harbor and for our nation, that we not lose regard for human dignity and worth**

**We lift up our children that they may know hope and peace**

**We pray for the teachers, staff and schools that incubate our future**

**We pray for those suffering the plague of gun violence**

**We pray for those challenged by physical and mental illness and we who love them**

**For those suffering grief and loss in the passing of loved ones**

**For ourselves, that we may ever live in the power of Hope.**

\*Please stand as you are able

## SILENT PRAYER

## PASTORAL PRAYER

One: We pray with the prayer taught to us by Jesus, saying...

**Our Father/Mother/God/Creator, 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*We invite you to greet one another with signs of peace*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## CALL TO OFFERING

## OFFERTORY

*Walk with Me, Lord*

Rosephanye Powell

Walk with me, Lord.

Walk with me.

All along this tedious journey,

Walk with me, Lord.

Please walk with me.

When I'm burdened, walk with me.

When my head is bowed down in sorrow, walk with me, Lord,

Please walk with me.

Along this tedious journey, Lord, Walk with me.

You are my shield. You are my sword.

Lord, walk with me.

Until I make it safely home.

Lord, walk with me.

I am weary.

Lord, please walk with me.

\*Please stand as you are able

**\*DOXOLOGY**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**God, thank you, thank you, thank you – for your grace, for this community of faith, for the gifts of our lives. Bless these offerings today that they might be used to further your reign of righteousness here and now. Work through each of us and through the ministries of this congregation that we might glorify you in all we do. Amen.**

\*Please stand as you are able

# We Are Sent Out

\*HYMN #352

*Go Forth for God*

OLD 124<sup>TH</sup>

1. Go forth for God, go to the world in peace; be of good  
2. Go forth for God, go to the world in love; strength - en the  
3. Go forth for God, go to the world in strength; hold fast the  
4. Go forth for God, go to the world in joy, to serve God's

cour - age, armed with heaven - ly grace, in God's good Spir - it  
faint, give cour - age to the weak; help the af - flict - ed;  
good, be ur - gent for the right; ren - der to no one  
peo - ple ev - ery day and hour, and serv - ing Christ, our

dai - ly to in - crease, till in the king - dom we be - hold God's  
rich - ly from a - bove God's love sup - plies the grace and power we  
e - vil; Christ at length shall o - ver - come all dark - ness with his  
ev - 'ry gift em - ploy, re - joic - ing in the Ho - ly Spir - it's

face. Go forth for God, go to the world in peace;  
seek. Go forth for God, go to the world in love;  
light. Go forth for God, go to the world in strength;  
power. Go forth for God, go to the world in joy,

\*Please stand as you are able

## COMMISSION AND BLESSING

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships,  
**so that we may seek truth boldly and love deep within your heart.**

May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression and exploitation of people,  
**so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.**

May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, starvation, and war,  
**so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.**

And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world,  
**so that we can do what others claim cannot be done.**

***Amen, Ameen, and Ashe!***

**POSTLUDE**      *Spring Comes to Boston Common*      Edward Thompson

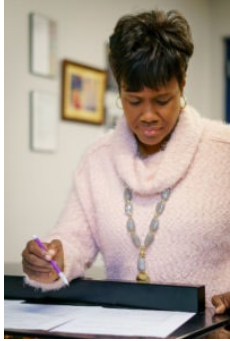
### **Our Worship Has Ended. Let Our Service Begin!**

Please join us at Coffee Hour after Worship  
<https://unitednewhaven.org/this-weeks-worship>

*If you are new to United, or feeling new, we'd love to keep in touch with you. If you wish, please share your contact information and prayer requests at*  
<http://unitednewhaven.org/connect-with-us>.

\*Please stand as you are able

## Today's Music



**Rosephanye Powell** has been hailed as one of America's premier women composers of solo vocal and choral music. She has an impressive catalogue of works published by some of the nation's leading publishers, including the Hal Leonard Corporation, the Fred Bock Music Companies, Gentry Publications, Oxford University Press, Alliance Music Publications, and Shawnee Press. Dr. Powell's works have been conducted and premiered by nationally and internationally renowned conductors and have been premiered at distinguished halls around the country, including Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center, and Spivey Hall, to name a few. Dr. Powell's works have been commissioned by professional choral ensembles, including Cantus and the Grammy award-winning men's vocal ensemble Chanticleer. Dr. André Thomas (National Vice President ACDA, Visiting Professor of Choral Conducting, Yale University) states: *Rosephanye Powell has undoubtedly earned the place as one of our great female choral composers. Her writing style is accessible for singers of all ages, making her a popular composer featured on Honor and All-State Choir Programs. Whether writing a short octavo-length piece or an extended work, her knowledge of the voice, voice leading, and her gift for melody will ensure...a high-quality composition.* The National American Guild of Organists commissioned today's offertory anthem for SATB choir plus organ. Powell has an innate understanding of the power of choir and organ, and has the organ playing a few riffs at the end inspired by gospel-style accompaniments on the Hammond organ.

\*Please stand as you are able

## THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP LEADERS

<b>Senior Pastor</b>	Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr.
<b>Director of Music</b>	Caesar Storlazzi
<b>United Church Choir</b>	
<b>Digital Deacons</b>	Worship & Music Ministry Team
<b>Coffee Hour Hosts</b>	Dale + June Richards George C. Lindsay
<b>Head Sexton</b>	William Henton
<b>Sexton</b>	Raymond O'Connor

## THIS WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH

- Apr 28th:** 10:00AM Worship at the Meeting House– Hybrid  
11:15AM Special Congregational Meeting - Hybrid
- May 1st:** 1:00PM United Staff Meeting – Online
- May 2nd:** 5:30PM Bible Study – Online
- May 3rd:** 6:00PM YHHAP Soup Kitchen – Take Out Only
- May 4th:** 6:00PM YHHAP Soup Kitchen – Take Out Only

## CHURCH NOTES

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## MEETING HOUSE WIFI INFORMATION

WiFi Network: UCG Meetinghouse  
WiFi Password: 2037874195

\*Please stand as you are able

**At United Church on the Green, we seek to Do Justice, Love Mercy and Walk Humbly with God, following the footsteps of Jesus.** We are also a Progressive Protestant Christian Church, a member of the Nationwide United Church of Christ (UCC).

**We have a long history.**

- Established 1742. Meetinghouse was built in 1815.
- The Amistad Incident? Abolition of slavery? The 1970 Black Panther trials? Divestment in South Africa? United was there.

**We believe God is still speaking to the world today... and we're trying to listen.**

- Not a "The Bible says it. I believe it. That settles it." kind of church. Questions encouraged. (Actually, they're necessary.)
- "Open and Affirming" of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people since 1989.

**We are working with God to build a better future.**

- Not interested in "saving souls" or "converting the heathen." God's love is for all.
- Trying to "connect the dots" to grow peace, justice, and compassion in the world.

#### Staff Contacts

**Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray Jr.,** *senior pastor*

**Caesar Storlazzi,** *director of music*

**Maxim Schmidt,** *digital media administrator*

**Nicole René Atchison,** *church administrator*

**Nancy Lupi,** *financial secretary*

**Jack Russell,** *director of operations*

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**Rev. Louise B. Higginbotham,** *minister emerita*

**Rev. Dr. Bonnie Scott,** *minister emerita*

**United Church on the Green, UCC**

**meeting house,** *corner of Temple & Elm*

**parish house office,** *corner of Temple & Wall*

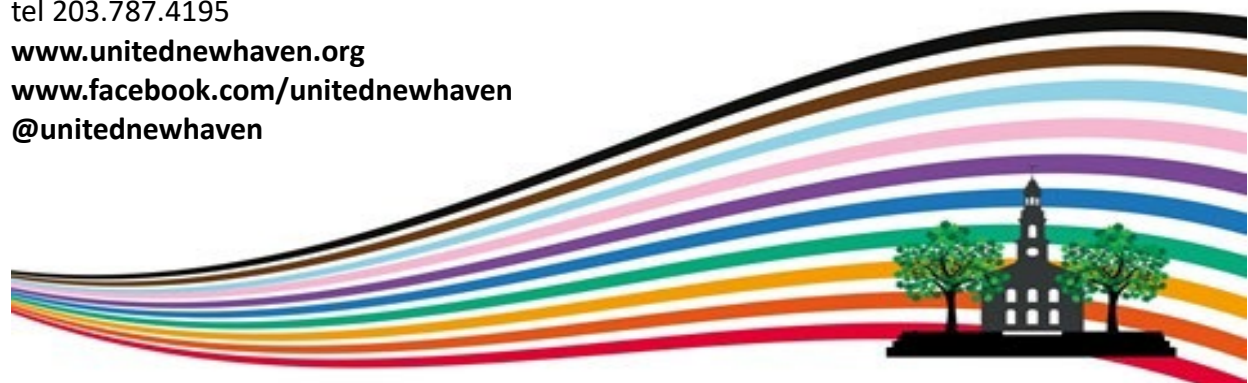
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