

Peace



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

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.

December 7th, 2025

10:00AM

Advent 2A

We Gather as Church

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

Flute Sonata in E-Flat, BWV 1031

J. S. Bach

I. Allegro moderato

Aimee Toner, *flute*; Caesar Storlazzi, *harpsichord*

WORDS OF WELCOME

Abram Guerra

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Today is the second Sunday of Advent. We open our hearts to Your peace.

All: Lord, in a world of trouble, we seek Your peace.

One: When life feels chaotic and worries surround us, remind us that Your peace is deeper than our fear.

All: Calm our minds, O God. Soothe our spirits.

One: You stilled storms before. You can calm us now.

All: Help us rest in Your presence. Help us share Your peace with others.

One: Jesus, our peace is in You.

All: Make us peacemakers—living signs of your peace. Amen

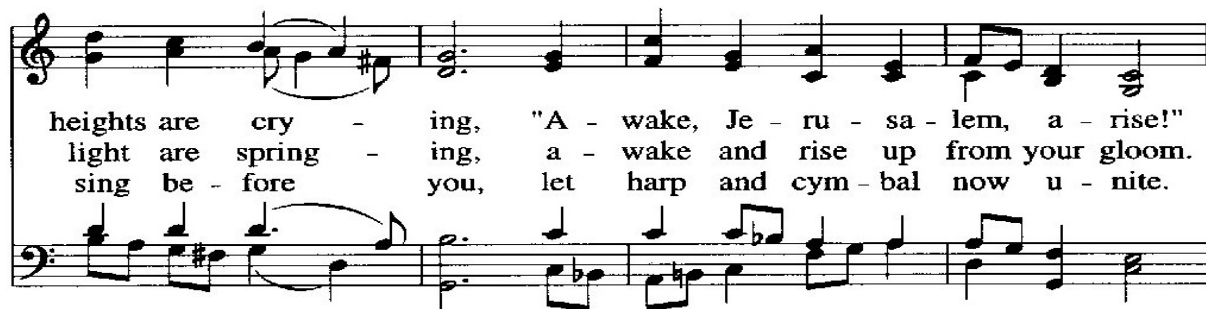
Amen

***HYMN #128** *Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying*

WACHET AUF



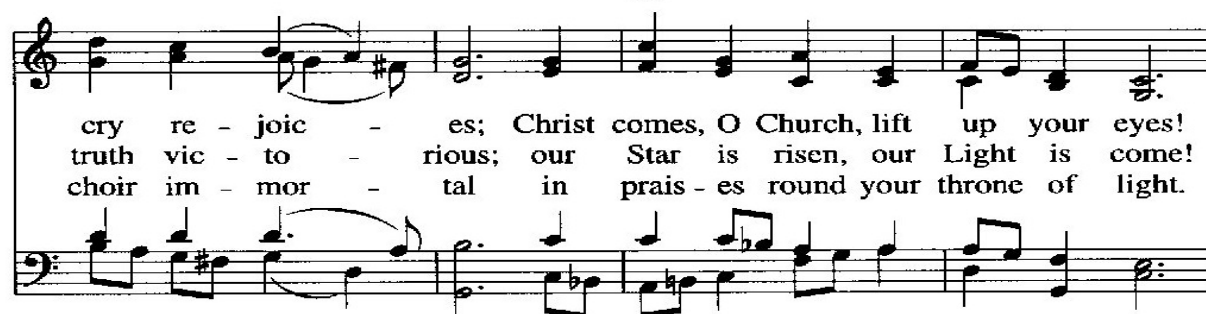
1. Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing; the watch-men on the
2. All who hear the watch-ers sing - ing, whose hearts with deep de -
3. Now let all the heav'ns a - dore you, let saints and an - gels



heights are cry - ing, "A - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, a - rise!"
light are spring - ing, a - wake and rise up from your gloom.
sing be - fore you, let harp and cym - bal now u - nite.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es and at the thrill - ing
Forth the Sav - ior comes, all glo - rious, in grace ar - rayed, in
Of one pearl each shin - ing por - tal, where we shall join the



cry re - joic - es; Christ comes, O Church, lift up your eyes!
truth vic - to - rious; our Star is risen, our Light is come!
choir im - mor - tal in prais - es round your throne of light.

Rise up, with will - ing feet go forth, the Sav - ior meet:
 Now come, O bless - ed One, God's own be - lov - ed Son,
 Our eyes be - hold the sight, our ears fill with de - light:

Al - le - lu - ia! Lo, great and small, we an - swer all;
 Al - le - lu - ia! We haste a - long, an ea - ger throng,
 Al - le - lu - ia! There - fore we sing, our hymns we bring,

we fol - low now with joy the call.
 and glad - ly join the ad - vent song.
 in praise to you our voi - ces ring.

GATHERING PRAYER (Unison)

Pastor Ray

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.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING**PEACE**

Denese Bellinger

Today we light two candles – the candle of hope and the candle of peace. The light of this second candle reminds us that God’s purpose in sending his Son into the world was to bring peace. We look at the division, the fighting, and the turmoil around us, and we see a world in dire need. We remind ourselves that peace begins with forgiveness, and that forgiveness begins in our hearts.

CANDLELIGHT RESPONSE

Caesar Storlazzi

Light a second candle,
Kindle it with peace;
For all those held captive
Let there be release.

In the face of cruelty,
Violence, and despair,
Light a second candle:
Peace will find you there.

CHILDREN’S GATHERING

All children are invited to come to the front for a brief time of greeting and prayer. Afterward, children are invited to go to the children’s room, or children may stay with their parents.

Children’s Sermon and Sing-Along

if you promise to be welcoming
then you are welcome here!
if you keep an open heart
an open mind and open ears!
if you know that folks are different
and it’s nothing to fear
then I promise you will always be
welcome here!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Abram Guerra

Gracious God, you tell us to love one another—to love others the way we so naturally love ourselves. Yet each of us must admit that we have failed to do so. Jesus taught us to love our neighbors even if they don't look like us, even if they don't think like us, even if they don't love like us, even if they don't pray like us, even if they don't speak like us, even if they don't vote like us. But we have failed to love one another with no exceptions.

Brief period of silence

Forgive us Holy One, and make us again in your image of Love. Blot out our sins, renew our minds, rekindle our hearts, and guide us by Your Holy Spirit into the Love that is your will. Amen.

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. 2. There's the place.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Siblings in Christ, God's Spirit did not leave us after that first Pentecost. The Spirit is still with us, empowering us to know mercy and grace, forgiveness and service. In this Spirit, and through Christ, we proclaim the Good News:

All: We are forgiven Alleluia! Amen.

We Listen for God's Word

SCRIPTURES

Angelyn Singer

Luke 24:49

⁴⁹Go and wait in Jerusalem until you receive power from on high.

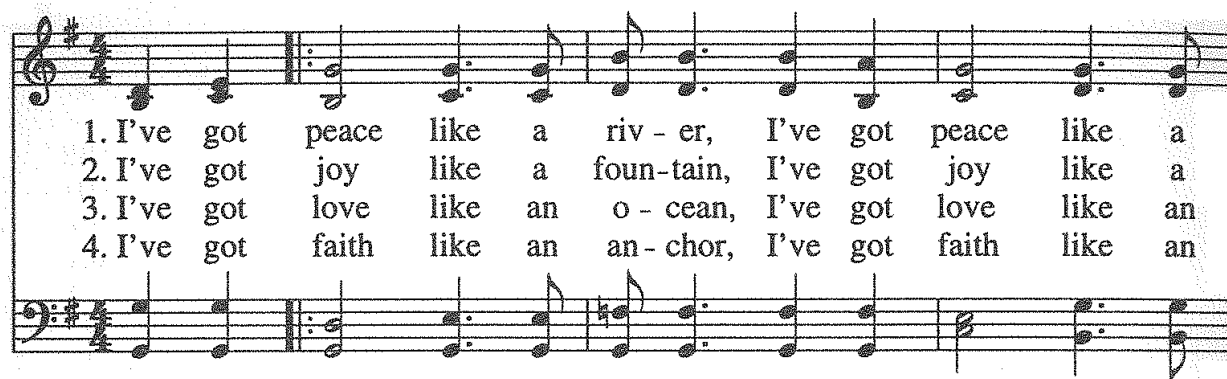
Acts 2: 1-4

¹And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

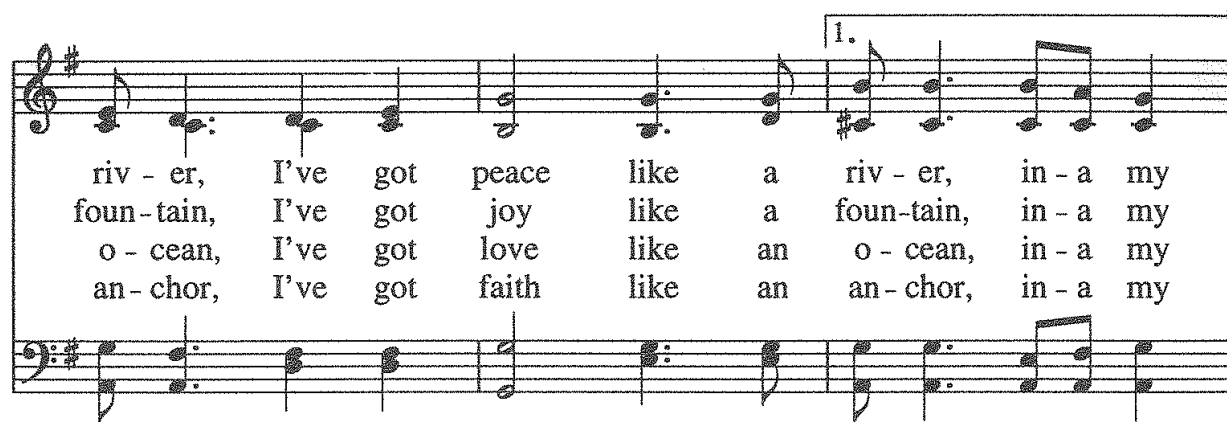
***HYMN #426**

I've Got Peace Like a River

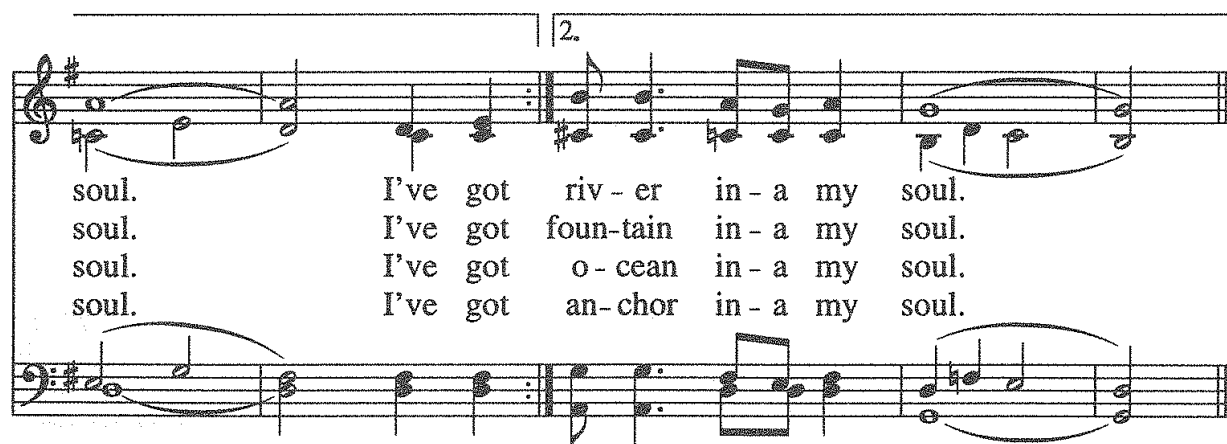
PEACE LIKE A RIVER



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.

SERMON: Until Then

Rev. Dr. Frederick J. Streets

SOLO

Flute Sonata, II. Siciliana

J. S. Bach

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Abram Guerra

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

We join our voices to pray, rejoice and celebrate the good things of our life together and those who are celebrating their birthdays including Maya Harris, Maria Elizabeth Smith and Music Director Caesar Storlazzi.

We pray that the Peace of God be with all of creation.

We pray for those who remain food and housing insecure.

We pray for our society that has so badly lost its way.

We pray that all will see the full humanity of Your beloved children.

We pray for ourselves and our kin that the light of God's love will shine on us all, particularly our queer and trans siblings.

We pray for immigrants, refugees, and the disappeared in these wicked times.

We pray for our world suffering the ravages of Climate Change, especially those dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Melissa.

We pray for children, teachers, parents, and school staffs that this school year they may together learn to dream of a different world.

We pray that justice and peace might rule with special prayers for those suffering because of famine in our land and across the world.

We pray for those suffering the plague of gun violence.

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

We pray that wisdom and courage might lead those with plenty, to help make a better world for all.

We pray that Your Church will be place of refuge and hope and that we may ever live in the power of Hope.

SILENT PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

COMMUNION

At United Church on the Green, we believe the communion table is truly open. This means that we invite people of all ages and denominations to partake of the sacrament. This is Christ's table, not ours. And so, we invite you to join us in this meal. But it is up to you to decide whether or not you wish to receive the bread and the cup. God loves you regardless.

INVITATION

PREFACE

Preface

Leader The Lord be with you, *All* And al -

Leader so with you. *All* Lift up your

All hearts. We lift them up to the Lord,

Leader Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. *All* It is

right to give our thanks and praise.

WORDS: From *The United Methodist Hymnal*
MUSIC: Mark A. Miller

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Source: *The Faith We Sing*, no. 2257a.

Beloved children of God, as we gather here this morning, we are the church! In this moment, we respond to the words of Jesus, who tells us: "...where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

And it is with the power of Christ that we proclaim that this table is open to all people — no matter who you are or what you believe or what you've been told.

Here at the Lord's table we remember the simple gathering of a chosen family that came together for a meal that proclaimed a new way of being in this world.

We remember God's radically inclusive love made real in the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

We remember the One who befriended the forgotten, embraced the outcast, and saw the Image of God in all people.

We remember the One who confronted every power that disconnected, marginalized, oppressed, and "other-ed."

It is here at this table that we find hope and imagination to see God's dream and promise of a world of wholeness, and it is here that we receive the nourishment and strength to continue on the paths of justice.

We recall that on the night he was betrayed, Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way he took the cup, saying, "This is my blood, my very life, poured out for you. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

God, we thank you for breathing this world into existence and proclaiming from its birth: "It is good."

We come to you with gratitude for the endless blessings that we see, feel, and know on our journeys of life.

We celebrate the rich diversity of your creation — every beautiful body, every shade of skin, every expression of love.

Through your Spirit, open our hearts to the joy we can find in the midst of life's challenges.

Remind us that we are loved — fiercely and forever.

And however the world may try to hold us down or tell us who to be,
remind us that nothing can separate us from your presence.
Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with all the faithful of
every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

SANCTUS

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord; God of
power and might. Heav - en and earth are
full of your glo - - -
- ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho -
san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high -
est! Blest is the one who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est! Ho - san - na in the high - est! Ho -
san - na in the high - est!

WORDS: From *The United Methodist Hymnal* (Isa. 6:3; Matt. 21:9)
MUSIC: Mark A. Miller

Music © 1999 Abingdon Press, admin. by The Copyright Co. Used by permission.
Source: *The Faith We Sing*, no. 2257-b.

And so, as we stand before this feast, we pray with the words you taught us to pray:

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.

HYMN #311

Let Us Break Bread Together

LET US BREAK BREAD

1. Let us break bread to- geth- er on our knees; (on our knees)
2. Let us drink wine to- geth- er on our knees;
3. Let us praise God to- geth- er on our knees;

Let us break bread to- geth- er on our knees; (on our knees)
Let us drink wine to- geth- er on our knees;
Let us praise God to- geth- er on our knees;

Refrain
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris- ing sun,

O Lord, have mer- cy on me. (on me)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING OF THE MEAL

Today we will share the meal together by individually taking the bread and cup and returning to our seat. We will then eat and drink communion as one community. During Communion, we serve grape juice. Gluten free bread is available.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

From these simple gifts of grape and grain, you have consecrated us as your children, called and sent to share your extravagant love with others. Open our eyes that we might see you near us. Open our lives that we might be agents of hope and love for our world. When we forget our holy calling, speak anew to our hearts, and draw us back. This is our prayer in the name of all that is holy. Amen.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

We invite you to greet one another with signs of peace

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

Harold Friedell

Draw us in the Spirit's tether;
For when humbly, in thy name,
Two or three are met together,
Thou art in the midst of them:
Alleluya! Touch we now thy garment's
hem.

The disciples used to gather
In the name of Christ to sup,

Then with thanks to God almighty
Break the bread and bless the cup,
Alleluya! So knit thou our friendship up.

All our meals and all our living
Make as sacraments of thee,
That by caring, helping, giving,
We may true disciples be,
Alleluya! We will serve thee faithfully.

***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.**

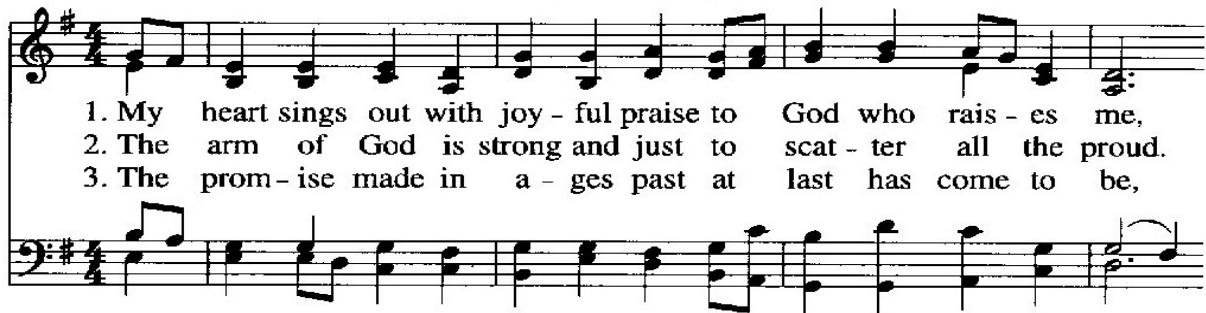
***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

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.

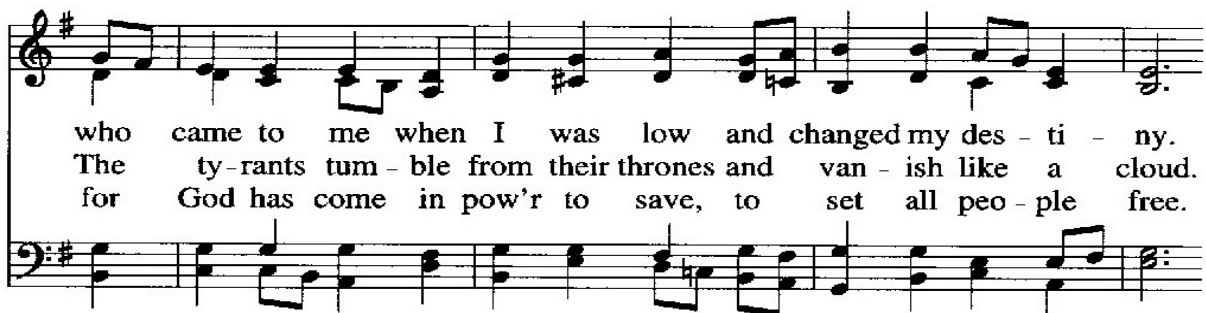
We Are Sent Out

***HYMN #124** *My Heart Sings Out with Joyful Praise*

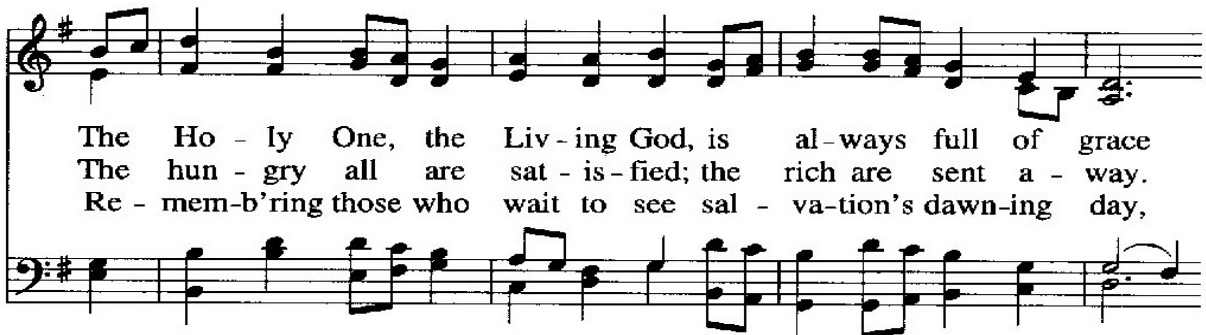
KINGSFOLD



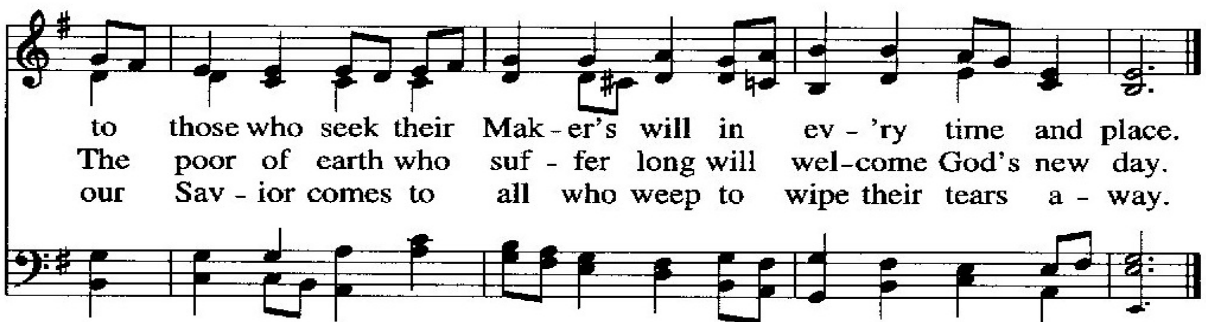
1. My heart sings out with joy - ful praise to God who rais - es me,
2. The arm of God is strong and just to scat - ter all the proud.
3. The prom - ise made in a - ges past at last has come to be,



who came to me when I was low and changed my des - ti - ny.
The ty - rants tum - ble from their thrones and van - ish like a cloud.
for God has come in pow'r to save, to set all peo - ple free.



The Ho - ly One, the Liv - ing God, is al - ways full of grace
The hun - gry all are sat - is - fied; the rich are sent a - way.
Re - mem - b'ring those who wait to see sal - va - tion's dawn - ing day,



to those who seek their Mak - er's will in ev - 'ry time and place.
The poor of earth who suf - fer long will wel - come God's new day.
our Sav - ior comes to all who weep to wipe their tears a - way.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Rev. Dr. Frederick J. Streets

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 our hearts.

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 we may reach out our hands to comfort them.

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

Flute Sonata, III. Allegro

J. S. Bach

Our Worship Has Ended. Let Our Service Begin!

Please join us at Coffee Hour after Worship

<https://unitednewhaven.org/this-weeks-worship>

Scan the QR Code to Sign Up for our Weekly Newsletter



Today's Music:

The Bach *Flute Sonata in E-Flat* presents a wonderful opportunity for us to display not only the talent of our guest soloist, Aimee Toner, but also to feature the harpsichord that has been entrusted to us by its owner, Mr. Britt Wheeler. The harpsichord was built in 1993 by Rutkowski and Robinette and is a two-manual instrument with four registers: a 16', 8', and 4' on the lower manual; and an 8' on the upper manual (with *buff* and *nasale* effects). Patterned after the large German harpsichords of the mid-eighteenth century, this instrument is based upon the 1759 harpsichord by Johann Adolf Hass in the Yale University Collection of Musical Instruments. This harpsichord is for sale and it will reside at United Church until such time as it finds a new home.

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Senior Pastor	Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr.
Guest Pastor	Rev. Dr. Frederick "Jerry" Streets
Director of Music	Caesar Storlazzi
Guest Organist	Karen Clute
Guest Soloist	Aimee Toner, <i>flute</i>
UCG Choir:	Cher Balkcom, Judith Carlson, Grecia Hernandez Hontz, Thomas Hernandez Hontz, Tess Klibanoff, Christopher Leimgruber, Julia Blue Raspe, Daniel Rausch, Connor Reese, Mary Scanlon, and Jean Welty
Digital Deacons	Worship & Music Ministry Team
Coffee Hour Coordinator	Dale Richards
Head Sexton	William Henton

THIS WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH

Dec 7th: 10:00AM Sunday Worship - Meeting House and Online
11:15AM United Church Christmas Party

Dec 9th: 12Noon Staff Meeting – Online

Dec 11th: 6:00PM Bible Study – Online

For Our Full Calendar, go to: www.calendarwiz.com/unitednewhaven

CHURCH NOTES

Musical Permissions

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MEETING HOUSE WIFI INFORMATION

WiFi Network: UCG Meetinghouse

WiFi Password: 2037874195

GUEST PASTOR

On Sunday December 7th, please welcome our Guest Pastor, Rev. Dr. Frederick “Jerry” Streets. Dr. Streets is the former Chaplain of Yale University and Senior Fulbright Scholar in the Department of Practical Theology and the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria in Pretoria, South Africa. His parish ministry spans 43 years of service respectively as Senior Pastor of the Mount Aery Baptist Church in Bridgeport, CT, the Church of Christ in Yale University and the Dixwell Avenue Congregational United Church of Christ in New Haven, CT. He is now Professor of Divinity and Social Work at Yale University Divinity School.

He and his wife, Annette are new members of United Church and the proud parents of our 2025 Summer Intern, Carolyn Streets.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROTOCOL

If there is a Parking Ban in New Haven, we will close. If we are having online church services during a closing, the Pastor will notify members and friends, via the eBlast. Go to our www.unitednewhaven.org for additional information.

Advent Activities 2025

Sunday, December 7th: Our United Church Christmas Party - 2nd Hour

Join us upstairs after service for cookies, caroling, tree decorating and a visit from Santa! Watch for more information in Dale's weekly 2nd hour message.

Monday, December 15th: Poinsettia Plant Dedication Deadline

We will be decorating the Meeting House with Poinsettia Plants this Holiday Season. If you would like to dedicate a Poinsettia to a loved one, send your Dedication Language to: office@unitednewhaven.org.

If you would like to contribute to our Floral Display Fund, go to: <https://unitednewhaven.org/donate> , or use a Poinsettia Fund envelope.

Sunday, December 21st: During 10:00AM Worship

The "No Stress" Christmas Pageant

No lines or rehearsals. Fun for all ages. Any child or adult who chooses can pick a costume and participate in the nativity scene. Join us as we collectively tell the story of the first Christmas. (Please arrive a few minutes early if you want to choose a costume) Stay for a delicious second hour of pizza and fellowship following the service.

Wednesday, December 24th: Candlelight Christmas Eve Service 6PM

We will have beautiful music provided by our choir and musicians and a Christmas Blessing by Candlelight. Children will be provided with Holiday Glow Sticks. Special music begins at 5:30PM

Thursday, December 25th: Christmas Day



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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