

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

www.unitednewhaven.org
www.facebook.com/unitednewhaven
[@unitednewhaven](https://www.instagram.com/unitednewhaven)

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.

August 23, 2026

10:00AM

Pentecost 13A

We Gather as Church

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

Prelude & Fugue in E Flat Major

J. S. Bach

From The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book I

(1685-1750)

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We come, God of the Journey, a people from different places, different histories, different lifestyles.

All: We come hoping to find companionship for the journey, solidarity for the struggle.

One: We gather, God of Hospitality, around your “welcome table, a table not yet round, but rounding.

All: We gather seeking to become a “round-table people, welcoming of all, with no preferred seating, no firsts and no lasts and no corners for ‘the least of these.’

One: We yearn, God of the Rainbow, for a new way of living and relating as neighbors not strangers, as brothers and sisters not ‘them and us.’

All: We yearn to live fully celebrating both the diversity of our human family, and the unity of our call to love and justice.

One: We hunger, God of Abundant Life, for lives that have meaning and integrity, and for relationships grounded in mutuality and respect.

All: We thirst for places to bring our doubts, our fears; places to express honestly who we are. We thirst for hope and encouragement as we struggle to follow Jesus in the way of life-risking love.

One: With the gift of your grace we are nourished.

All: With the promise of your presence may we be strengthened to be faithful. Amen.

***HYMN #23**

We Gather Together

KREMSER

1. We gath - er to - geth - er to ask for your bless - ing, you chas - ten and
2. Be - side us to guide us, O God, with us join - ing, or - dain - ing, main -
3. We all do ex - tol you, our lead - er tri - um - phant, and pray that you

has - ten your will to make known; the wick - ed op - press - ing now cease from dis -
tain - ing, re - deem - ing our world; so from the be - gin - ning the fight we were
still our de - fend - er will be. Let your con - gre - ga - tion es - cape trib - u -

tress - ing. We praise your name, O God; for - get not your own.
win - ning; Lord, you were at our side; we trust in your word.
la - tion. Your name be ev - er praised! O Lord, make us free!

GATHERING PRAYER (Unison)

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr.

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

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

All things bright and beautiful
All creatures great and small
All things wise and wonderful
The Lord God made them all

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.

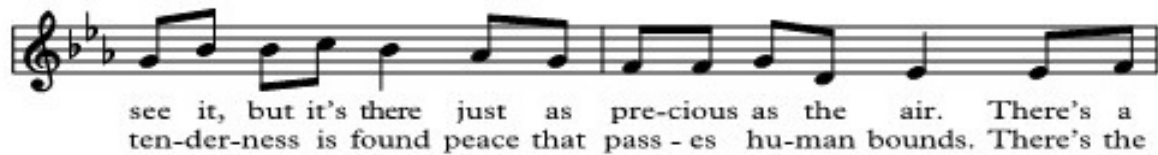
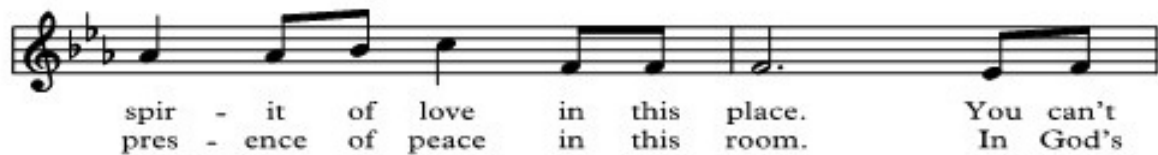
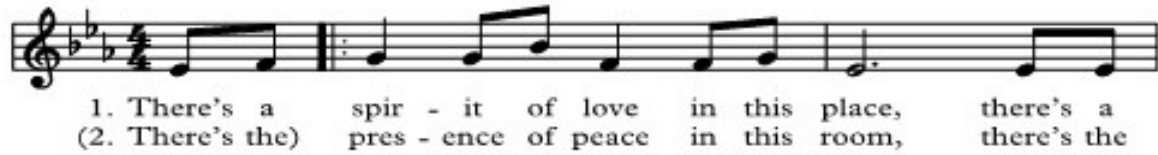
Brief period of silence

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.

HYMN RESPONSE

Spirit of Love in This Place

MEDEMA



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

SCRIPTURE

Exodus 1:8-2:10

Darnell Ray

The Israelites Are Oppressed

8 Now a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. 9 He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. 10 Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." 11 Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. 12 But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. 13 The Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude 14 and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

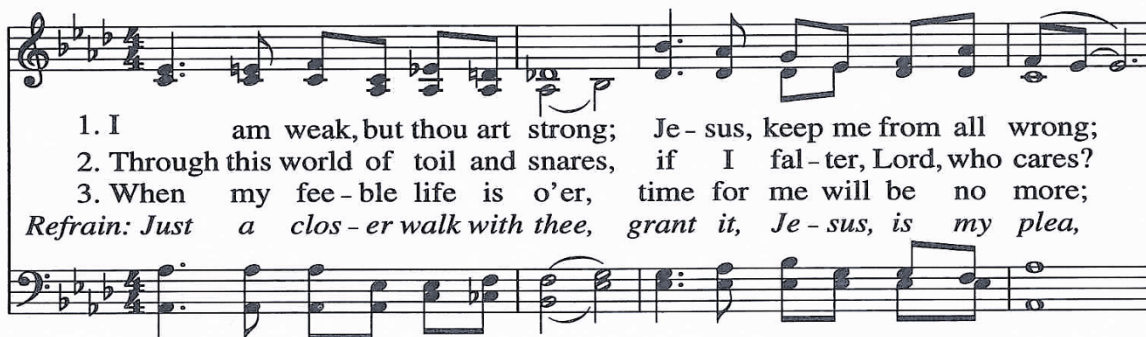
15 The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 16 "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, kill him, but if it is a

daughter, she shall live.” 17 But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. 18 So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, “Why have you done this and allowed the boys to live?” 19 The midwives said to Pharaoh, “Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.” 20 So God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very strong. 21 And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. 22 Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, “Every son that is born to the Hebrews[a] you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live.”

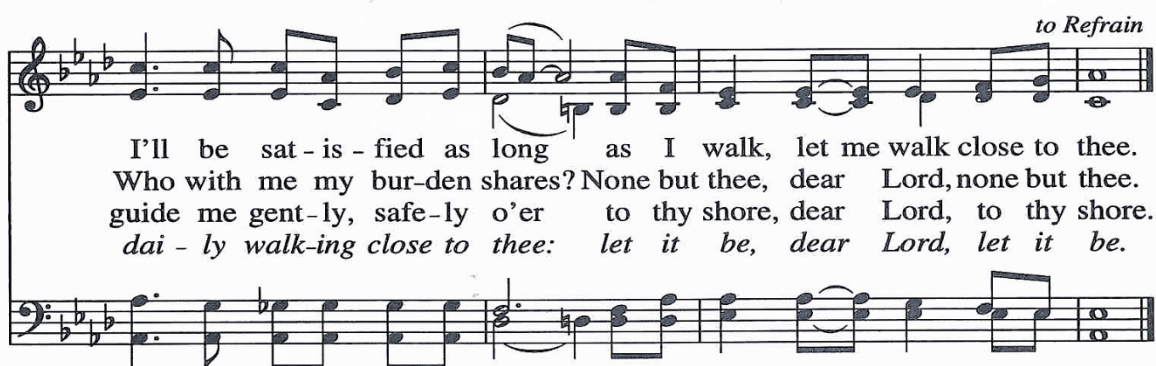
***HYMN #436**

Just a Closer Walk

CLOSER WALK



1. I am weak, but thou art strong; Je - sus, keep me from all wrong;
2. Through this world of toil and snares, if I fal - ter, Lord, who cares?
3. When my fee - ble life is o'er, time for me will be no more;
Refrain: Just a clos - er walk with thee, grant it, Je - sus, is my plea,



to Refrain
I'll be sat - is - fied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee.
Who with me my bur - den shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee.
guide me gent - ly, safe - ly o'er to thy shore, dear Lord, to thy shore.
dai - ly walk - ing close to thee: let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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 this week including Kathe Bloom, George C Lindsay and Pam Schneider.

Our prayers begin with rejoicing that in Your love and creativity you have made us a rainbow. Made us in Your image that is multi-splendored and too rich for simple definitions.

We give thanks for the Holy Spirit that is with Us, filling our hearts with hope and power.

With Us your children. Of every hue. Of every race. Of every culture and tongue.

Immigrants. Refugees. Queer. Trans. All of your children; especially those who need special care and protection in these times.

We pray for the many whose lives are being lost in senseless wars. For everyone but especially for the children. May their light not be extinguished because of cruelty and malice but continue to shine in our hearts.

We pray for our world, suffering the ravages of Climate Catastrophe. Standing expectantly before an uncertain future, we pray for our children, their teachers, school staffs and administrators that they may together teach us to dream of a different world.

We pray for the unhoused in our own city who now face uncertainty because too many believe that warm weather erases their need.

We lift special prayers for those suffering hunger anywhere in the world.

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

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

We pray that as Your Church we will be a place of refuge that ever lives in the power of Hope.

SILENT PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

And so, 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.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

We invite you to greet one another with signs of peace

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Prelude in E Major

J. S. Bach

***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**

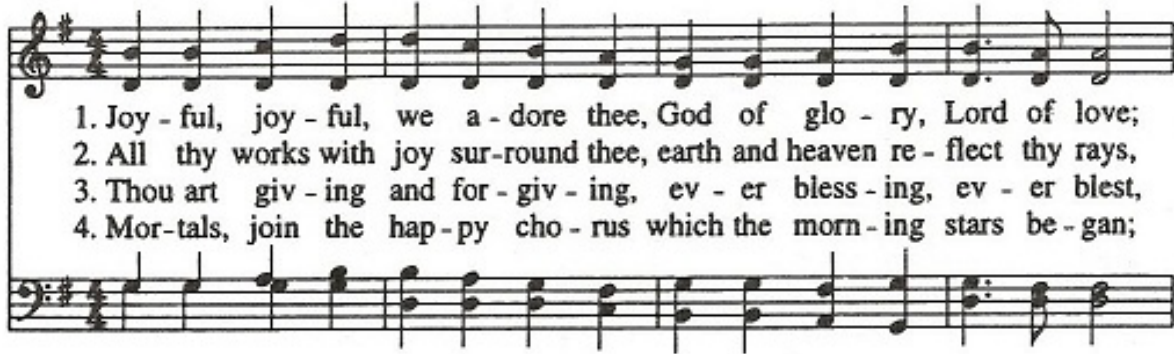
God, thank you, thank you, thank you – for your grace, for this community of faith, for the gifts of our lives. Bless these offerings today that they might be used to further your reign of righteousness here and now. Work through each of us and through the ministries of this congregation that we might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

We Are Sent Out

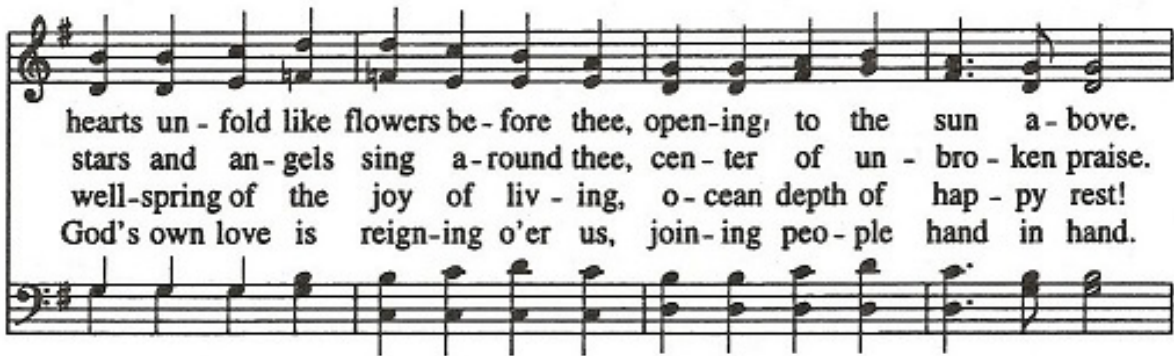
*HYMN #7

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

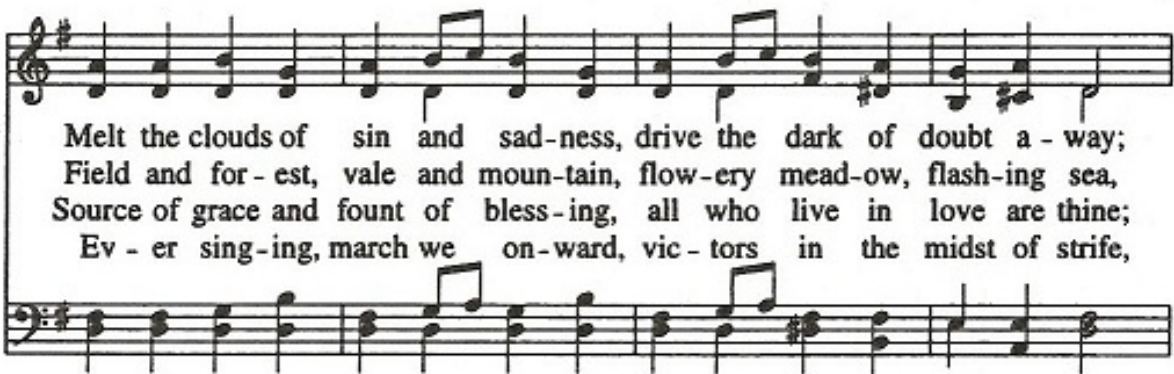
HYMN TO JOY



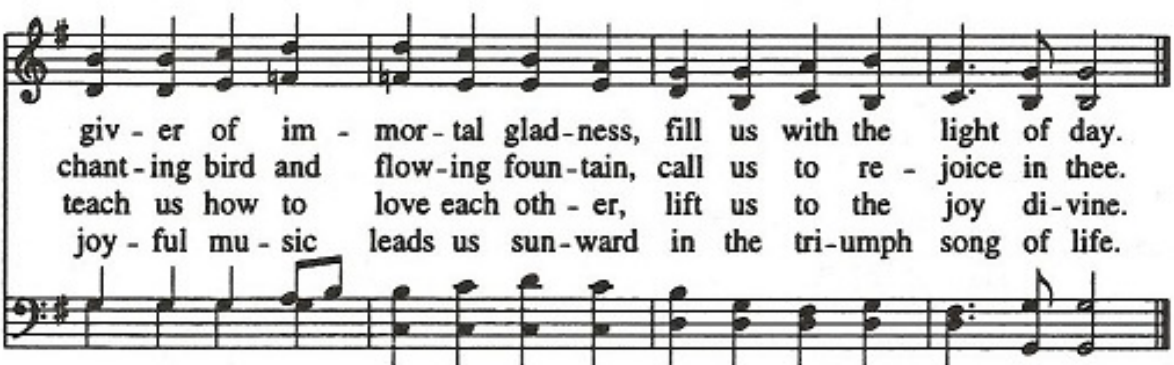
1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
2. All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heaven re - flect thy rays,
3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,
4. Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho - rus which the morn-ing stars be - gan;



hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore thee, open-ing, to the sun a - bove.
stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!
God's own love is reign-ing o'er us, join-ing peo - ple hand in hand.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness, drive the dark of doubt a - way;
Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flow-ery mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
Source of grace and fount of bless-ing, all who live in love are thine;
Ev - er sing-ing, march we on - ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife,



giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re - joice in thee.
teach us how to love each oth - er, lift us to the joy di-vine.
joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

RITUAL OF BLESSING AND SENDING

Congregation: Darnell, we give God thanks for your presence and ministry in our midst. We give thanks that you have been a sibling and a friend. You have been a witness for and to this people of God. As you go forth into the new life which God is preparing for you, do so with our blessing.

Minister: Receive this anointing as a sign that we the people of United Church on the Green seal you with our love and hopes that your life will continue to be a blessing to many. Remember us as we will ever hold you in our affections.

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 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

Fugue in D Major

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>

THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr.

Director of Music

Caesar Storlazzi

Digital Deacons

Worship & Music Ministry Team

Coffee Hour Coordinator

Dale Richards

Head Sexton

William Henton

THIS WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH

August 23th: 10:00AM Worship Service – Online + Meeting House

August 27th: 6:00PM Bible Study – Online

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

CHURCH NOTES

Musical Permissions

CCLI: 11242315, One License: A-736676

CCS WorshipCast: 22251728 All rights reserved.

MEETING HOUSE WIFI INFORMATION

WiFi Network: UCG Meetinghouse

WiFi Password: 2037874195

Year-Round Narthex Floral Display

The Sacred Spaces Committee would like you to know that you don't have to wait until Easter or Christmas to remember or honor someone with Narthex Flowers. You can bring the floral arrangements yourself, or provide a monetary donation. Suggested donation is \$40. Use a Flower Dedication Form, a Flower Offering Envelope or pay online: <https://unitednewhaven.org/donate>

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*

Nancy Lupi, *financial secretary*

Jack Russell, *director of operations*

Bailey Murphy, *church secretary*

pastor@unitednewhaven.org

music@unitednewhaven.org

media@unitednewhaven.org

nancyalupi@gmail.com

operations@unitednewhaven.org

office@unitednewhaven.org

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*

323 Temple Street, New Haven, CT 06511

203-787-4195

www.unitednewhaven.org

[@unitednewhaven](https://www.facebook.com/unitednewhaven)

[@unitednewhaven](https://www.facebook.com/unitednewhaven)

