

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.

October 5, 2025

10:00AM

Pentecost 17C

We Gather as Church

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

Reverence
(from Sanctuary for Organ)

Gwyneth Walker

WORDS OF WELCOME

Pastor Ray

CALL TO WORSHIP

At God's table of justice, everyone has a place and none are turned away.

Here strangers are welcomed as friends, the poor sit alongside the rich, and the upside-down kin-dom of God is revealed.

At God's table of abundance, a banquet of righteousness and liberation is set for all.

Here the powerless are heard; the outcast are showered with honor, and the inside-out kin-dom of God is revealed.

At God's table of life, all peoples know peace and creation flourishes.

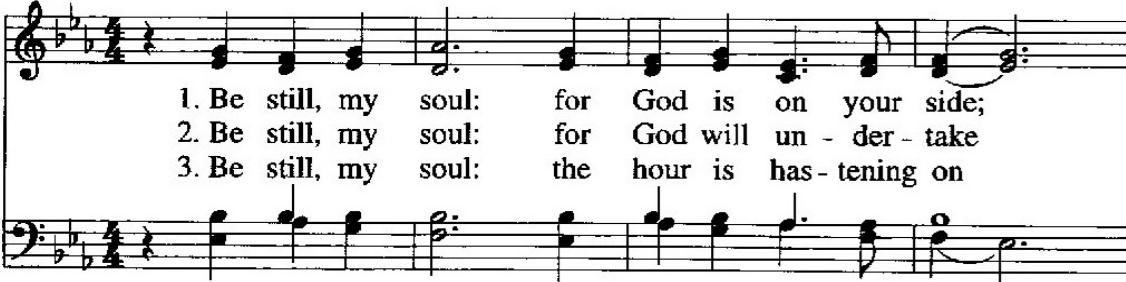
Here the hopeless are nourished with possibility, the complacent are transformed into advocates for change. Here in our very midst the kin-dom of God is revealed.

Amen

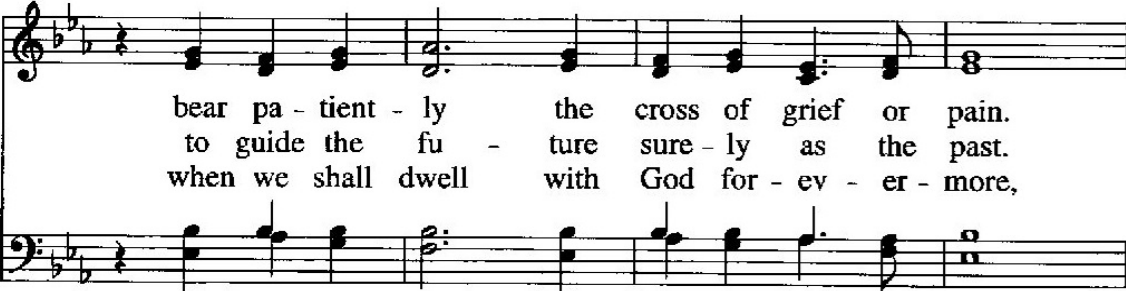
***HYMN #95**

Be Still My Soul

FINLANDIA



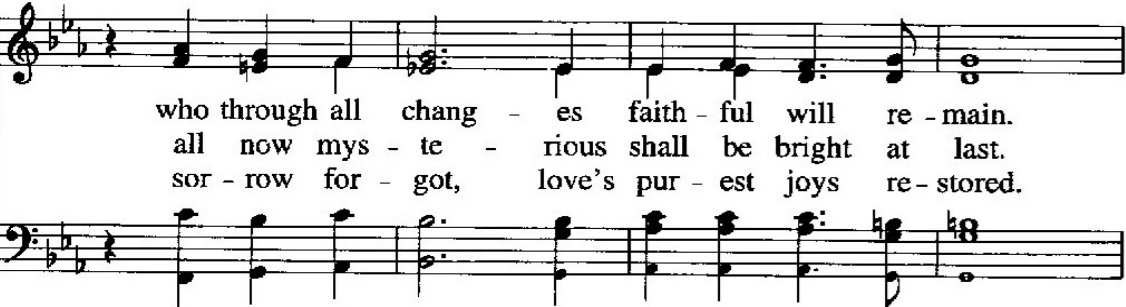
1. Be still, my soul: for God is on your side;
2. Be still, my soul: for God will un - der - take
3. Be still, my soul: the hour is has - tening on



bear pa - tient - ly the cross of grief or pain.
to guide the fu - ture sure - ly as the past.
when we shall dwell with God for - ev - er - more,



Trust in your God, your sav - ior and your guide,
Your hope, your con - fi - dence let noth - ing shake;
when dis - ap - point - ment, grief, and fear are gone,



who through all chang - es faith - ful will re - main.
all now mys - te - rious shall be bright at last.
sor - row for - got, love's pur - est joys re - stored.



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.

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

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 37:1-9

Kate Reynolds

¹Do not fret because of the wicked; do not be envious of wrongdoers, ²for they will soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb. ³Trust in the Lord and do good; live in the land and enjoy security. ⁴Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. ⁶He will make your vindication shine like the light and the justice of your cause like the noonday. ⁷Be still before the Lord, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices. ⁸Refrain from anger and forsake wrath. Do not fret—it leads only to evil. ⁹For the wicked shall be cut off, but those who wait for the Lord shall inherit the land.

***HYMN #364** *This Little Light of Mine* AFRICAN AMERICAN SPIRITUAL

1. This lit-tle light of mine, (of mine) I'm gon-na let it shine; (Oh ___)

(of mine) (Oh ___)

This lit-tle light of mine, (of mine) I'm gon-na let it shine; (Oh ___)

This lit-tle light of mine, (of mine) I'm gon-na let it shine;

(of mine)

let it shine, let it shine, let it shine. (oh, let it shine.)

st. 1-4

2. This great joy I have, I'm gon-na let it shine . . .
3. Ev-'ry-where I go I'm gon-na let it shine . . .
4. All— through the night I'm gon-na let it shine . . .
5. repeat st. 1

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr.

MUSICAL MEDITATION

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, including Erskine McIntosh, Sr + Lisa Guerra

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

We pray for the innocent who suffer the world over because of war and that justice and peace might rule.

We lift special prayers for those suffering and perishing in the conflict and famine in Gaza.

We pray for migrants, refugees, and the disappeared in these days of wickedness.

We pray that in these times of persecution Your church will be place of refuge and hope.

We pray for our world suffering the ravages of Climate Change.

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 for those suffering the plague of gun violence.

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

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

For ourselves, 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. _____ Lift up your

All hearts. _____ We lift them up to the Lord, _____

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

All 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

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Source: *The Faith We Sing*, no. 2257-b.

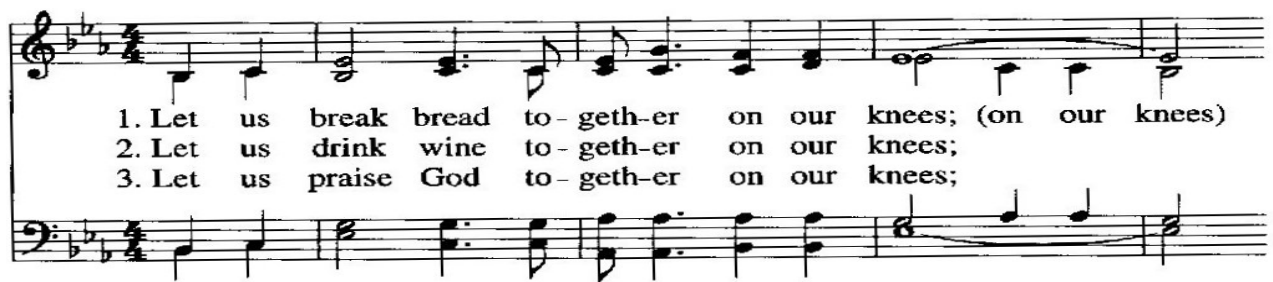
And so, as we stand before this feast, we pray with the words you taught us to pray:

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.

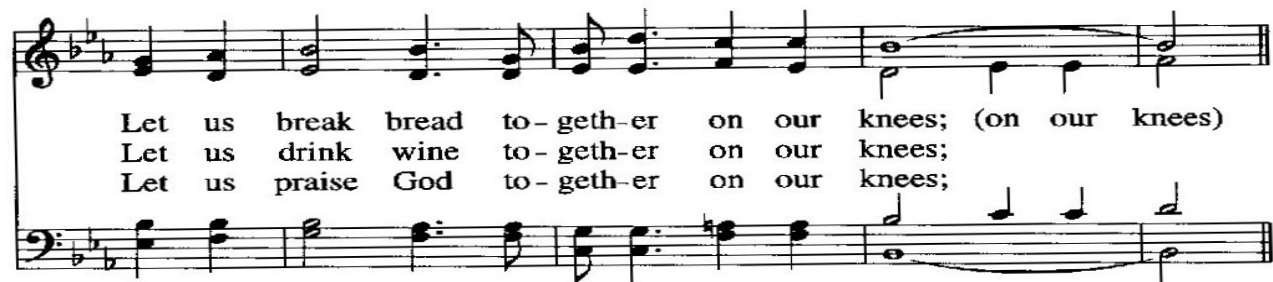
HYMN #311

Let Us Break Bread Together

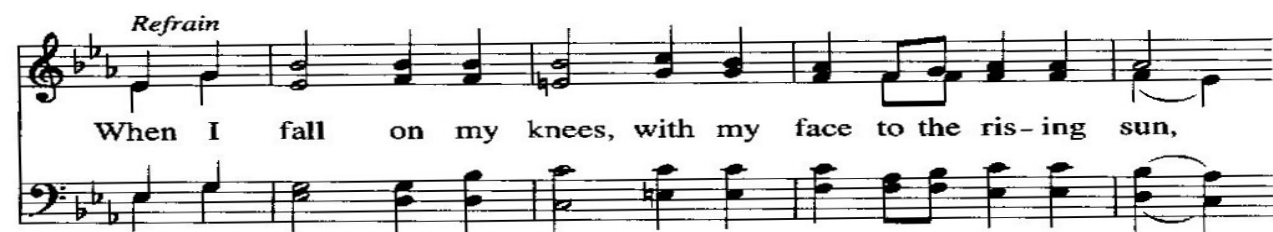
LET US BREAK BREAD



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.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Moderator:

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22: 37–40, NRSVUE)

Dearly beloved, called of God to be God's children through Jesus Christ our Lord, you are here so that, in the presence of God and God's people, you may enter into the fellowship and communion of Christ's Church.

Do you attest that you do truly repent of your sins; you heartily receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master; you consecrate yourself unto God and your life to God's service; you accept God's Word as your law, and The Holy Spirit as your Comforter and Guide; and trusting in God's grace to confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, you promise to do God's holy will and to walk with this Church in the truth and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ?

New members:

We do.

Congregation:

"In the name of the Lord Jesus, we the members of this Church bid you welcome to its fellowship. We pledge to you our sympathy and our help that you may ever more increase your knowledge and love of God. And we pray God that all of us, being united in the faith, may come to that fullness of life which God has prepared for those who love God."

REAFFIRMATION OF THE COVENANT

Moderator:

Dearly beloved, called of God to be God's children through Jesus Christ our Lord, you are here so that, in the presence of God and God's people, you may reaffirm your membership in the fellowship and communion of Christ's Church.

Do you attest that you do truly repent of your sins; you heartily receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Master; you consecrate yourself unto God and your life to God's service; you accept God's Word as your law, and The Holy Spirit as your Comforter and Guide; and trusting in God's grace to confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, you promise to do God's holy will and to walk with this Church in the truth and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Congregation:

We do.

Congregation:

In the name of the Lord Jesus, we the members of this Church embrace one another in fellowship. We pledge to one another our sympathy and our help so that we all may ever more increase our knowledge and love of God. And we pray God that all of us, being united in the faith, may come to that fullness of life which God has prepared for those who love God.

BLESSING

Representative of the Congregation:

May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord be gracious to you; and may the Lord look with favor on you and give you peace.

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

We invite you to greet one another with signs of peace

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY

Who at my Door Is Standing? arr. K. Lee Scott

Who at my door is standing,
There patiently drawing near,
Who entrance is demanding?
Whose is the voice I hear?
Sweetly the tones are falling:
“Now open the door for me!
If thou wilt heed my calling,
I will abide with thee.”

Within, the rooms are darken'd,
All filled with dust and sin;
How shameful, how unworthy
For Christ to enter in.
Yet, the tones are falling:

“Now open the door for me!
If thou wilt heed my calling,
I will abide with thee.”

Door of my heart, I hasten!
Thee will I open wide.
Though he rebuke and chasten,
He shall with me abide.
Sweetly the tones are falling:
“Now open the door for me!”
Lord God, I hear thee calling,
Come now, abide with me.

Dear Lord, abide with me!

***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 #66

O How Glorious, Full of Wonder

IN BABILONE

1 O how glo-rious, full of won-der is your name o'er all the earth,
2 When we see your lights of heav-en, moon and stars, your power dis-played,
3 You have set us in com-mu-nion with the won-ders of your hand,
4 O how won-drous, O how glo-rious is your name in ev-ery land,

God, who wrought cre-a-tion's splen-dor, bring-ing suns and stars to birth!
Who are we that you should love us, crea-tures that your hand has made?
Made us fly with ea-gle pin-ion, pil-grims o-ver sea and land.
God, whose pur-pose shines be-fore us toward the goal that you have planned!

Rapt in rev-erence we a-dore you, mar-veling at your mys-tic ways.
Born of earth, yet full of yearn-ing, mix-ture strange of good and ill,
Soar-ing spire and ru-ined cit-y, these our hopes and fail-ures show.
Yours the will our hearts are seek-ing, con-sci-ous of our hu-man need.

Hum-bly now we bow be-fore you, lift-ing up our hearts in praise.
From your ways so of-ten turn-ing, yet your love does seek us still.
Teach us more of hu-man pit-y, that we in your im-age grow.
Spir-it in our spir-it speak-ing, make us yours, O God, in-deed.

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Pastor Ray

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 on the Magnificat

Johann Pachelbel

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



THIS WEEK'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr.

Director of Music

Caesar Storlazzi

UCG Choir: Cher Balkcom, Judith Carlson, Grecia Hernandez Perez, Thomas Hontz, Maribeth Johnson, Tess Klibanoff, Christopher Leimgruber, Julia Blue Raspe, Daniel Rausch, Connor Reese, and Jean Welty

Digital Deacons

Worship & Music Ministry Team

Coffee Hour Coordinator

Dale Richards

Head Sexton

William Henton

THIS WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH

Oct 5th: 10:00AM Sunday Service - Meeting House and Online

Oct 7th: 12Noon Staff Meeting – Online

Oct 9th: 6:00PM Bible Study – Online

Oct 10th: 6:00PM Jazz Vespers – Meeting House

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

UPCOMING CHURCH-WIDE EVENTS

Jazz Vespers at United Church

270 Temple Street (corner of Elm)

New Haven, CT 06511

Friday Evening - October 10th, 2025 at 6PM

Join us for an Evening of Beautiful Music

Caesar Storlazzi, *piano*; Arti Dixson, *percussion*;
and Jim Andrews, *bass*

This Service is free and open to the public.

Our Congregational Retreat

The Unitarian Society - The Library

700 Hartford Tpke

Hamden CT 06517

Saturday October 18th, 9:00AM – 3:00PM

See Moderator Abram Guerra to help with the planning.

FLORAL DEDICATIONS AT UNITED CHURCH

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.

The Committee would like to open this opportunity to our church members and friends. 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*

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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