

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

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.

March 1, 2026

10:00AM

Lent 2A

We Gather as Church

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

Let Us Break Bread Together

Martha Sobaje
(b. 1948)

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

One: For Rahab's red cord and for all who risk their lives to give refuge to your people,

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For Ruth's loyalty and Esther's courage, and for all who serve you in foreign lands,

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For Deborah's leadership and Miriam's dance and for all who break glass ceilings,

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For Sarah's faithfulness and Jael's fierceness and for all who take things into their own hands,

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For Hagar and all the unnamed women who survived to do your will in the wilderness,

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For the Alabaster Jar Woman and for all who flout convention in your name,

All: We thank you, O God.

One: For Mary Magdalene's heart and for all who linger at the cross,
All: We thank you, O God.

One: For all the grace-filled women who cross borders and dismantle
fences, who face down soldiers and walk picket lines, who like Mary the
Mother of Jesus carry your love into the world,
All: We thank you, O God.

***HYMN #175**

O Sing a Song of Bethlehem

KINGSFOLD

1 O sing a song of Beth-le-hem, of shep-herds watch-ing there,
2 O sing a song of Naz-a-reth, of days of joy and sun,
3 O sing a song of Gal-i-lee, of lake and woods and hill,
4 O sing a song of Cal-va-ry, its glo-ry and dis-may,

and of the news that came to them from an-gels in the air:
O sing of fra-grant flo-wers' breath, and of the sin-less One:
of One who walked up-on the sea and bade its waves be still:
of One who hung up-on the tree, and took our sins a-way:

The light that shone on Beth-le-hem fills all the world to-day;
For now the flowers of Naz-a-reth in ev-ery heart may grow;
For though, like waves on Gal-i-lee, rough seas of trou-ble roll,
For Christ who died on Cal-va-ry is ris-en from the grave;

of Je-sus' birth and peace on earth the an-gels sing al-way.
now spreads the fame of Je-sus' name on all the winds that blow.
when faith has heard the Sav-ior's word, falls peace up-on the soul.
God's sov-ereign Child, who rec-on-ciled, is might-y now to save.

The musical score consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are printed below the vocal line of each system.

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.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. My heart, my heart a - dore you! My
 San - to, san - to, san - to. ¡Mi co - ra - zón te a - do - ra! Mi

heart knows how to say to you: you are ho - ly, Lord!
 co - ra - zón te sa - be de - cir: ¡San - to e - res Señ - or!

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

Genesis 16:7-14

Harrison Davis-Wang

⁷The angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from and where are you going?" She said, "I am running away from my mistress Sarai." ⁹The angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit to her." ¹⁰The angel of the Lord also said to her, "I will so greatly multiply your offspring that they cannot be counted for multitude." ¹¹And the angel of the Lord said to her, "Now you have conceived and shall bear a son; you shall call him Ishmael, for the Lord has given heed to your affliction. ¹²He shall be a wild ass of a man, with his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him, and he shall live at odds with all his kin." ¹³So she named the Lord who spoke to her, "You are El-roi," for she said, "Have I really seen God and remained alive after seeing him?" ¹⁴Therefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

*HYMN #235

Let It Breathe on Me

BREATHE ON ME

by Magnolia Lewis-Butts (1941)

1. Let it breathe on me, let it breathe on me, let the breath of the
2. While I'm work - ing, God, in your vine - yard here, I can - not
3. When the path - way, God, I can - not see, when the way is

Spir - it breathe on me. Let it breathe on me, let it
serve with - out you near; O come, blessed Spir - it, so
hard, O breathe on me; give me grace to know when

breathe on me, let the breath of God now breathe on me.
close to me that I may feel you breathe on me.
you are near, then, I pray, O Spir - it, breathe on me.

SERMON

Rev. Dr. Stephen G. Ray, Jr

ANTHEM

Ave Verum Corpus

William Byrd
(1540-1623)

*Ave verum Corpus, natum de Maria Virgine,
Vere passum, immolatum in cruce pro
homine:
Cujus latus perforatum, unda fluxit
sanguine,
Esto nobis praegustatum in mortis examine.
O dulcis, O pie, O Jesu Fili Mariae,
Miserere mei. Amen.*

Hail, true Body, born of the Virgin Mary,
Who having truly suffered,
was sacrificed on the Cross for mankind:
Whose pierced side overflowed with blood,
May it be for us a foretaste in the trial of
death.
Oh dear, merciful Jesus, son of Mary.
Have mercy on me. Amen.

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 Jack Russell, Maxim Schmidt and Sue Hartt

As we celebrate Women's History Month, we speak words of remembrance and gratitude for courage and persistence.

We pray that we might keep faith with those who struggled for all to see the full humanity of Your beloved children.

Of every hue. Of every race. Of every culture and tongue.

Immigrants. Refugees. Our Queer and trans siblings.

We pray for those who have lost their lives bearing witness to the humanity, dignity, and value of our siblings and kin.

We pray for the unhoused in our own city that they might find shelter and welcome.

We lift special prayers for those suffering famine in our land and across the world.

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

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 for our society that has so badly lost its way and that the current reign of evil will be broken.

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

COMMUNION

At United Church on the Green, we believe the communion table is truly open. This means that we invite people of all ages, races, ethnicities and faith traditions to partake of the sacrament. This is Christ's table, not ours. And so, we invite you to join us in this meal. God loves you and bids welcome.

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. *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 about God’s welcome.

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 tongue and 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

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

From the End of the Earth

Alan Hovhaness
(1911-2000)

Hear my cry, O God:
From the end of the earth will I cry unto
Thee.
When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me
To the rock that is higher than I.

For Thou hast been a shelter for me,
And a strong tower from the enemy,
I will trust in the covert of Thy wings.
Alleluia.

***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 #333

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

SICILIAN MARINERS

1. Lord, dis - miss us with your bless - ing; fill our hearts with
2. Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion for the gos - pel's
3. So that when your love shall call us, Sav - ior, from the

joy and peace; let us each, your love pos - sess - ing,
joy - ful sound; may the fruits of your sal - va - tion
world a - way, fear of death shall not ap - pall us,

tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace: oh, re - fresh us,
in our hearts and lives a - bound: ev - er faith - ful,
glad your sum - mons to o - bey: may we ev - er,

oh, re - fresh us, trav - eling through this wil - der - ness.
ev - er faith - ful to the truth may we be found.
may we ev - er reign with you in end - less day.

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 on the Magnificat

Johann Pachelbel
(1653-1706)

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, Delaney Fox, Grecia Hernandez Hontz, Thomas Hernandez Hontz, Tess Klibanoff, Christopher Leimgruber, Julia Blue Raspe, Daniel Rausch, Connor Reese, and Mary Scanlon

Digital Deacons

Worship & Music Ministry Team

Coffee Hour Coordinator

Dale Richards

Head Sexton

William Henton

THIS WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH

Mar 1st: 10:00AM Sunday Worship - Meeting House and Online

Mar 3rd: 12Noon Staff Meeting – Online

Mar 5th: 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

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROTOCOL

If we close during inclement weather, and we have online church services, the Pastor will notify members and friends, via the eBlast, TextInChurch and our Social Media Platforms.

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*

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Rev. Louise B. Higginbotham, *minister emerita*

Rev. Dr. Bonnie Scott, *minister emerita*

United Church on the Green, UCC

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