



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.

June 7, 2026

10:00AM

Pentecost 2A

We Gather as Church

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

Prelude and Fugue in F Major

J. S. Bach

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come today, representing all the majesty of creation

Diverse and beautiful, blessed and beloved, all made in the image of the Creator of all things

We come today, called to this time and this place by an infinite God.

Who hears our cries and responds with love and mercy.

We come today: Transgender, Nonbinary, Bisexual, Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Intersex, Gay, Queer, Ally

We come today, knowing you will listen and answer our needs.

We come today, knowing you care for us

We come today, knowing that even when others reject us, your arms are open to offer comfort. We come. Declaring the Dignity and Value of all of your children.

Amen

***HYMN #26**

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

LOBE DEN HERREN

1. Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the God of cre - a - tion!
2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous-ly reign - eth,
3. Praise to the Lord, who doth pros-per thy work and de-fend thee;
4. Praise to the Lord, the Al-might-y, the God of cre - a - tion!

Sing, my soul, prais-ing the source of thy health and sal - va - tion!
shel-ters thee un - der-neath wings, yea, so gen - tly sus - tain - eth!
sure-ly great good-ness and mer - cy here dai - ly at - tend thee.
All that hath life and breath, sing out thy heart's ju - bi - la - tion!

All ye who hear, now to God's tem - ple draw near;
Hast thou not seen how thy de - sires e'er have been
Pon - der a - new what the Al - might-y can do,
Let the A - men sound from God's peo - ple a - gain:

join me in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
grant - ed in what God or - dain - eth?
who with great love doth be - friend thee.
join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion.

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



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

Acts 9:1-19

Reader

¹Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ²and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" ⁵He asked, "Who are you, Lord?" The reply came, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. ⁶But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do." ⁷The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. ⁸Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ⁹For three days he was without sight and neither ate nor drank. ¹⁰Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." He answered, "Here I am, Lord." ¹¹The Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, ¹²and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight." ¹³But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem, ¹⁴and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who invoke your name." ¹⁵But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel; ¹⁶I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." ¹⁷So Ananias went and entered the house. He laid his hands on Saul and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁸And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, ¹⁹and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

***HYMN #426** *I've Got Peace Like a River* African American Spiritual

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

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 Don Bertrand + JoJo Saunders.

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

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

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.

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

Sarabande

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**

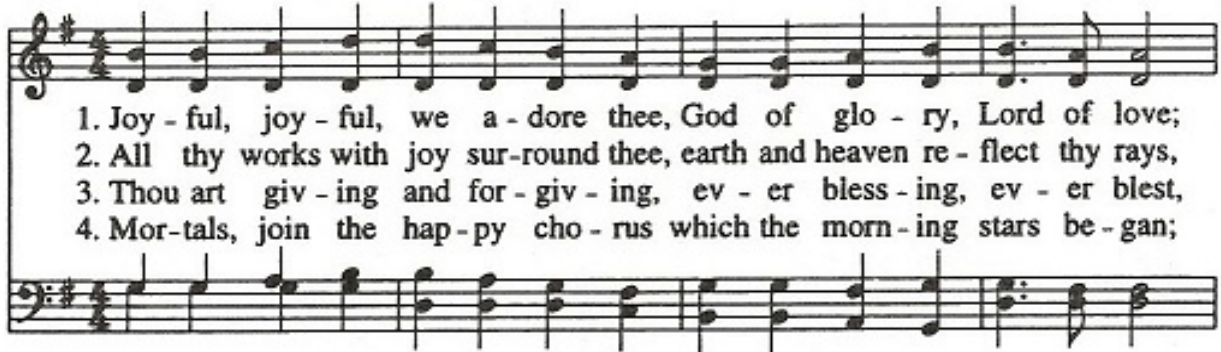
God, thank you, thank you, thank you – for your grace, for this community of faith, for the gifts of our lives. Bless these offerings today that they might be used to further your reign of righteousness here and now. Work through each of us and through the ministries of this congregation that we might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

We Are Sent Out

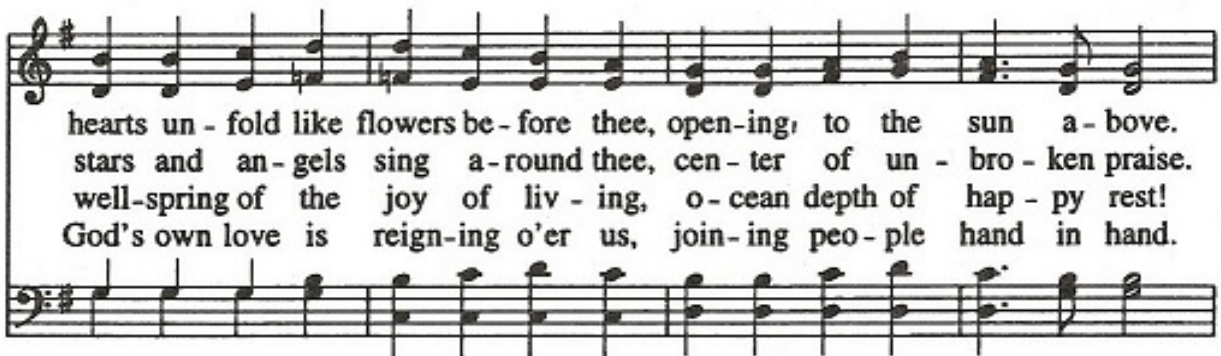
*HYMN #7

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

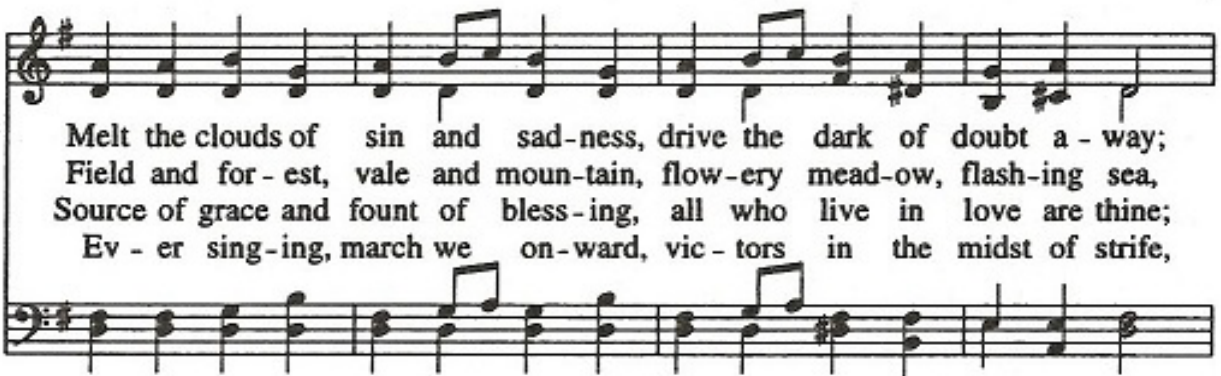
HYMN TO JOY



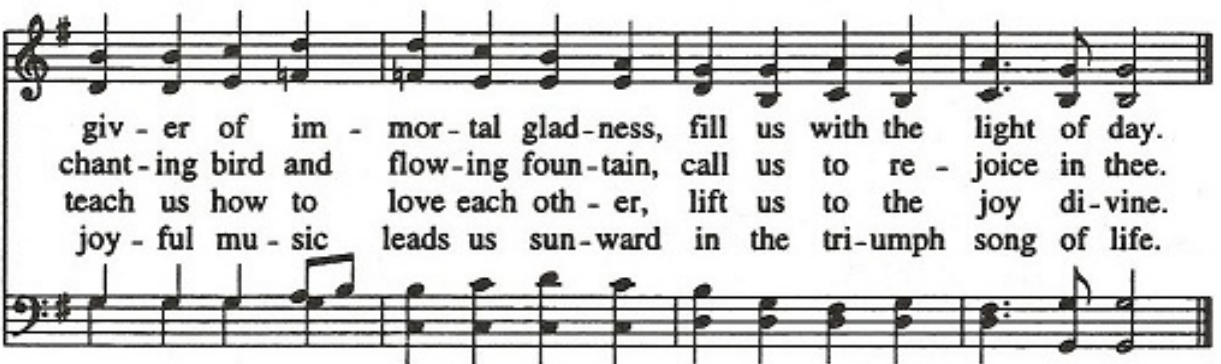
1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
2. All thy works with joy sur-round thee, earth and heaven re - flect thy rays,
3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless - ing, ev - er blest,
4. Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho - rus which the morn - ing stars be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

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 G 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>

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
Digital Deacons	Worship & Music Ministry Team
Coffee Hour Coordinator	Dale Richards
Head Sexton	William Henton

THIS WEEK AT UNITED CHURCH

June 7th: 10:00AM Worship Service - Meeting House and Online

June 9th: 12Noon Staff Meeting – Online

June 11th: 6:00PM Bible Study – Online

June 12th: 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

Jazz Vespers at United Church

Friday Evening, June 12th, 2026 at 6:00PM

Join us for a time of meditation and joy with jazz, readings, singing and prayer presented by the UCG Jazz Trio featuring Caesar Storlazzi (piano), Arti Dixson (drums), and Jim Andrews (bass). The congregation at UCG loves music in all forms, from organ and harpsichord, to choral, and to the experimental and improvisatory. Some of the music at the Vespers will be rehearsed, but some will also be brand new to the trio: improvised on the spot! Come and take a break at the end of your week Hope to see you there!

Caesar Storlazzi

Director of Music

Pride Prom – June 20th 2026 Sign Up to Help!

Friends! How would you like to plan a prom? Balloons, music, dancing and food, it doesn't happen by itself! If you love to organize, reach out or coordinate you will be a great fit for our PRIDE Prom Organizing Committee!

Service and Justice Task Force will be meeting regularly to prepare for PRIDE Prom 2026 to be held this June in our very own Great Hall. If you would like to participate please reach out to Jeff Hopper, Cher Balkcom or Susan Ray.

Annual Congregational Meeting - June 28, 2026

Notice is given that the 283rd Annual Congregational Meeting of United Church on the Green will be held following the Worship Service on Sunday June 28, 2026 in the Bradley Room at United Church on the Green, New Haven. The purpose of the Meeting is to adopt an annual budget; to vote on nominees for the Leadership Board positions now or soon to be vacant; and for such other conversation for the good of the congregation.

ANNUAL REPORT

If you are in Leadership, please send a brief synopsis of your Committee/ Task Force Work and Accomplishments for the past year to the front office:

office@unitednewhaven.org Please send all reports in Word Format by Friday June 19th, so that we have ample time to send it out to the copiers for publishing.

RECENT NEW MEMBERS

If you joined United Church in 2026, please send your name and the date you joined to the front office: office@unitednewhaven.org, so that we can acknowledge you in this year's Annual Report.

Stewardship Campaign

You may be already aware that this fiscal year's stewardship campaign has begun and we want to encourage you to be generous with your pledging so that together, as one United family, we could support our Church.

No pledge is too great or too small. What is most important is your participation. The easiest, secure, and most reliable way to pledge is online at:

<https://unitednewhaven.org/donate> This will bring you to a secure site, where you can fill out a pledge form.

Please take the time to consider and pray over your decision, and submit your pledge before Tuesday, June 30, 2026.

Thank you so much for your willingness to be part of this year's campaign. Together with you, we shall be the Church we are called to be.

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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