

UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

United Church Of Christ



Loving God. Loving Neighbor. Building Community.



Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
An LGBTQ+ Open and Affirming Congregation

176 Cooper Avenue, Montclair, NJ
973-744-7424

www.unioncong.org

September 28, 2025
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

*Please rise in body or spirit.
You are invited to join in the liturgy **in bold type.**

*Childcare is available on the first floor of this building for children ages 0-4.
Ushers can help direct you there. Children K-5th grade are invited to attend Godly
Play Sunday School after the Message for All Ages.*

*Please wear a name tag so we can greet one another by name
(There are blank name tags in the back of the sanctuary).*

PRELUDE – Come, Ye Weary, Heavy Laden
UCC Ringers

arr. Sondra K. Tucker

WELCOME

Rev. Katrina Forman

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (*adapted from Liturgy written by Rev. Shannon Blosser*)

Leader: We are all God's children, beloved and created by God in God's own image.

ALL: We celebrate the beloved glory of God found in every person.

Leader: We are all part of God's family and God's family reflects the image of God.

ALL: We are part of a family of God that embraces our abilities and differences.

Leader: God's family includes every person. We are a collection of people who love God. We are neurologically typical and neurologically divergent. Some are fully abled and some are disabled.

ALL: We are all a part of God's family.

Leader: Some can move in the world without thinking about access. Some need additional access and help to live in community.

ALL: We are all part of God's family.

Leader: God's family is diverse and divergent.

All: We are all part of God's family. Thanks be to God!

***OPENING HYMN (insert) - No Matter**

Words & Music: Roger P. Miller

$\text{♩} = 120$

F Dm Gm⁷ C F F⁷

No mat-ter who, — no mat-ter what — no mat-ter where you are on the

B^b G⁷ F Dm G⁷ Gm⁷ C⁷

jour-ney of life; you're wel- come, wel- come in this place. — No mat-ter

F Dm Gm⁷ C F F⁷

who, — no mat-ter what, — no mat-ter where you are on the

B^b G⁷ F Dm Gm⁷ C⁷ C F F

jour-ney of life: ac- cept- ed, wel- comed by God's grace. grace.

[To verses] [Last time, Fine]

Verses

F B^badd⁹ B^bmadd⁹

1. For we are fam - i - ly, — meant to be —
 2. And in di - ver - si - ty, — u - ni - ty, —
 3. To - geth - er we will sing, — wor - ship bring,
 4. The God who spoke through Christ, speaks to us; —

F F⁹ F⁷ B^badd⁹

pur - posed for e - ter - ni - ty. — Born in love, —
 har - mo - ny for all to see: — Just - ice and —
 hands and hearts out - stretched to all. — Je - sus praise,
 lis - ten to our Sav - ior's call. — Wel - come home,

B^bmadd⁹ G⁹ G⁷ Gm⁷/C C⁷ D.C.

from a - bove, — God's com - mu - ni - ty. —
 e - qui - ty, — God's com - mu - ni - ty. —
 hearts a - blaze, lis - ten to God's call.
 wel - come in, — wel - come one and all. —

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (unison)

Rev. Leah McCullough

God, you teach us we are all your children. Yet sometimes we miss the spark of the divine in our neighbors. You call us to steward our resources for the common good, and the creation of the beloved community. Yet sometimes we don't know how, or are afraid to take risks. Help us to open our hearts and try again.

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

PASSING THE PEACE

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 5:17-20

Shawn Goberdhan

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Rev. Katrina Forman

SPECIAL MUSIC – Holy Spirit, Light Divine

Stephen Oosting

*Holy Spirit, Light Divine,
Shine within this heart of mine.
Chase the shades of night away.
Turn the darkness into day.*

*Holy Spirit, Joy Divine,
Cheer this saddened heart of mine.
By my many woes depart.
Heal my wounded bleeding heart.*

*Holy Spirit, Power Divine,
Cleanse this guilty heart of mine.
Long has sin without control,
Held dominion over my soul.*

*Holy Spirit, All Divine,
Dwell within this heart of of mine.
Cast down every idol throne,
Reign supreme and reign alone.*

Sanctuary Choir

SERMON – Dialogue on Disability, Inclusion, and What We Can Do Together

***HYMN (insert) - All Are Welcome (vs. 1, 2, 4, & 5)**

TWO OAKS

Words & Music: Marty Haugen



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can
 2 Let us build a house where proph - ets speak, and words are
 3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter,
 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the
 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and



safe - ly live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell
 strong and true, where all God's chil - dren dare to seek
 wine, and wheat; a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground
 wood and stone to heal and strength-en, serve and teach,
 vi - sions heard and loved and trea - sured, taught and claimed



how hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
 to dream God's reign a - new. Here the cross shall stand as
 where peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
 and live the Word they've known. Here the out - cast and the
 as words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the
 wit - ness and as sym - bol of God's grace; here as
 Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we
 strang - er bear the im - age of God's face; let us
 laugh - ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace; let this

love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
 one we claim the faith of Je - sus:
 share in Christ the feast that frees us: all are wel - come;
 bring an end to fear and dan - ger:
 house pro-claim from floor to raf - ter:

(F#m) (Em) (D) (Em) (A7) (D) (G) (D) ((A7))
 Am Gm F Gm C7 F Bb F (C7)

all are wel - come; all are wel - come in this place.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns

Josh Robeson

Jonathan Grevatt

Pastoral Prayer

Musical Call to Prayer – O Lord, Hear My Prayer

Arr. Jacques Berthier

One: *O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call, answer me.*

All: ***O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and listen to me.***

Lord's Prayer (unison)

Our {name for God}, 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.

OFFERTORY

Invitation

Music for Meditation

Rev. Katrina Forman

Laurie Walle

*Response of Thanksgiving – Doxology

Words: Thomas Ken, adapt. William B. Abernathy

GOODNESS

Music: Paul M. Vasile

4
Praise to our God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise to our God all crea-tures

7
here be - low; Praise to our God for all that love has done; Cre -

a - tor, Christ, and Spi - rit Our God the Three in One A - men.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Rev. Leah McCullough

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***HYMN (insert) - We Are Called**

Words & Music: David Haas

1 Come! Live in the light! Shine with the
 2 Come! O - pen your heart! Show your
 3 Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that

joy and the love of the Lord! We are called
 mer - cy to all those in fear! We are called
 great day when all will be one! God will reign,

to be light for the king - dom, to live in the
 to be hope for the hope - less so ha - tred and
 and we'll walk with each oth - er as sis - ters and

free - dom of the cit - y of God.
 vio - lence will be no more.
 broth - ers u - nit - ed in love.

Refrain
 We are called to act with jus - tice; we are called to
 love ten - der - ly; we are called to serve one an -
 oth - er, to walk hum - bly with God.

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Katrina Forman

***CHORAL BENEDICTION #81 – God Be with You**

Words: Jeremiah E. Rankin

Music: William G. Tomer

***God be with till we meet again; By good counsel guide, uphold you,
 With a shepherd's care enfold you: God be with you till we meet again.
 Till we meet, till we meet, till we meet at Jesus' feet
 Till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.***

POSTLUDE

Laurie Walle

THANK YOU for joining us for worship this morning. Please sign a welcome card if you are visiting and put it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher as you leave. You can also find an electronic Welcome Card by scanning QR code on the pew in front of you, or by going to this webpage: <https://www.unioncong.org/welcome-card/>

PLEASE STAY FOR A SECOND HOUR IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM AFTER WORSHIP TODAY

The Second Hour will be available in person and on Zoom. The Zoom link is in today's email, on the home page of the church website (next to the online bulletin button), and in the online calendar listing.

ALTAR FLOWERS are donated today by Rob Middleton and Isabelle Genest in memory of their parents.

THANK YOU Sunday Welcome Team and the Sanctuary Choir!

LIVESTREAM VIDEO: Nkenge Jones, **SOUND OPERATOR:** Joe Cristiani

TODAY: The High School Youth Group Meets At 4pm

Come join Rev. Leah in the Assembly Room to eat ice cream, get to know one another, and talk about what the Youth Group can be this year.

TODAY: Prayer Vigil For ICE Detainees At Delaney Hall, 2pm-3pm, Carpool Leaves Union Cong At 1:15pm

From The New Jersey UCC Conference:

If you've been following local news, you may have read about the central role Delaney Hall is playing in the immigration abduction crackdown in New Jersey. Today, at 2pm, there will be a Prayer Vigil at Delaney Hall to express solidarity with the families most directly impacted by what's going on. We hope you'll join us and bring a friend. "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Gather at the church at 1:15pm to carpool.

RSVP FOR THE MEN'S RETREAT: OCTOBER 3-5 At Crossroads Retreat Center

This year's retreat theme is "The Changing Role Of Men In Family And Society." The weekend will be facilitated by Rev. Rusty Eidmann-Hicks. You can register for the entire weekend or just the Saturday program. Please register for the Men's Retreat on the church website under Christian Education, www.unioncong.org/christian-education. If you have any questions, reach out to Mike Spinella at 973-943-0501 or mspinella2554@gmail.com.

SMALL GROUPS THIS WEEK:

Daytime Bible Study Meets Tuesdays at 12:30pm in the Guild Room

Daytime Bible Study is resuming the study of Psalms. If you have any questions, please reach out to Paul Nishimoto at pnishimoto@gmail.com.

Union Cong Chair Yoga Alternates Taking Place In Person And On Zoom on Wednesdays

Email Sara T. at sgtamargo@gmail.com for the meeting location.

Union Sages Meets Wednesday, October 1 At Noon In The Guild Room

Sages is a group of older members and friends that meet twice a month for a brown bag lunch and informal discussion of questions and issues that are relevant in that stage of their lives. The purpose of this group is to build community and support by providing a forum for discussion and gathering as a community.

Come Make A Joyful Clang! The UCC Ringers Handbell Choir Rehearses Wednesdays at 7pm In The Sanctuary.

Email Jeremy at jeremy@unioncong.org for more information. All levels are welcome.

REV. LEAH LEADS CARING CONNECTIONS WITH PORCH TIME IN AT THE PARSONAGE (P1) AND PLAY TIME IN THE PARK

Let's get to know each other! Join Rev. Leah for "Caring Connections," opportunities to gather, share our stories and offer up what is on our hearts these days – the joys and the struggles. We'll meet in two locations - on the porch and in the park. Questions? Contact Rev. Leah at lmccullough@unioncong.org or 973-746-4285.

Porch Time at the Parsonage (P1)

Porch time offers a space of refuge, where we'll pause, be present to the gathered group, and share our stories. Porch time is not an appointment, or therapy, or advice-giving; it's a spiritual practice. "A porch ain't made for rushing. It's where you sit and let the day explain itself to you." (*William Faulker*) Come sit a spell!

Porch Time at the Parsonage (P1) Takes Place:

Tuesday, October 7, 3pm–4:30pm

Thursday, October 16, 10am–11:30am

Tuesday, October 21, 10am–11:30am

Wednesday, October 29, 2:30pm – 4pm

Play Time in the Park

Gather at Brookdale Park near the playground. For the first hour, we'll visit where the kids can play on the playground. For the second hour, we'll share a walk and chat. Come for one or both hours.

Play Time In The Park Takes Place:

Thursday, October 9, 3:30pm – 5:30pm

Sunday, October 19, 2pm – 4pm

Please RSVP For The Interfaith Sukkot – Monday, October 13th At 3:30pm

Our Congregation is partnering with local freelance Rabbi Nikki DeBlosi to learn about the holiday of Sukkot. Spend some judgement-free time in a sukkah (a temporary hut), learn the basics of this Jewish fall festival, and make a school-child-age-appropriate craft. This event is designed for interfaith families, whatever your experience with Judaism or knowledge level, and will take place from 3:30pm-5pm. Please RSVP by Sunday, October 5th.

Sign up for the Interfaith Sukkot using the QR code, by going to <https://bit.ly/interfaithsukkot>, or by going to the on the Members' Reference page of the church website: www.unioncong.org/member-reference/.



CHURCH CONTACT INFO: Church Office: 973-744-7424

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