

# 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](http://www.unioncong.org)

**May 11, 2025**  
**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

\*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 will be leading worship today with the  
children's pageant, so we invite kids to stay in the service until after the pageant.*

*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 – Laudate Dominum**

**Mozart**

Kimberly Martinez & Jeremy Carlisle

*Laudate Dominum omnes gentes  
Laudate eum, omnes populi  
Quoniam confirmata est  
Super nos misericordia eius  
Et veritas, veritas Domini manet,  
manet in aeternum  
Gloria Patri et Filio  
Et Spiritui Sancto  
Sicut erat in principio  
Et nunc, et semper  
Et in saecula saeculorum  
Amen*

*Praise the Lord, all nations  
Praise God, all you peoples  
Because it was confirmed  
God's mercy is upon us  
And the truth, the Lord's truth  
remains forever  
Glory to God, the Son, and the Holy  
Spirit  
As it was in the beginning  
Now and always  
Forever and ever  
Amen.*

**WELCOME**

BJ Carter

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: In the midst of darkness & chaos...

**All: God imagined.**

God imagined a world filled with trees, and blue skies and fluffy white clouds.  
In the meadow,

**God imagined foxes, bluebirds, and slithering snakes.**

In a world of rainstorms and wildlife and cattle and grasses blowing in the breeze...

**God imagined humanity.**

In a world teeming with billions of people...

**God imagined me.**

God imagined you and God imagined me. We are created in the image of God.

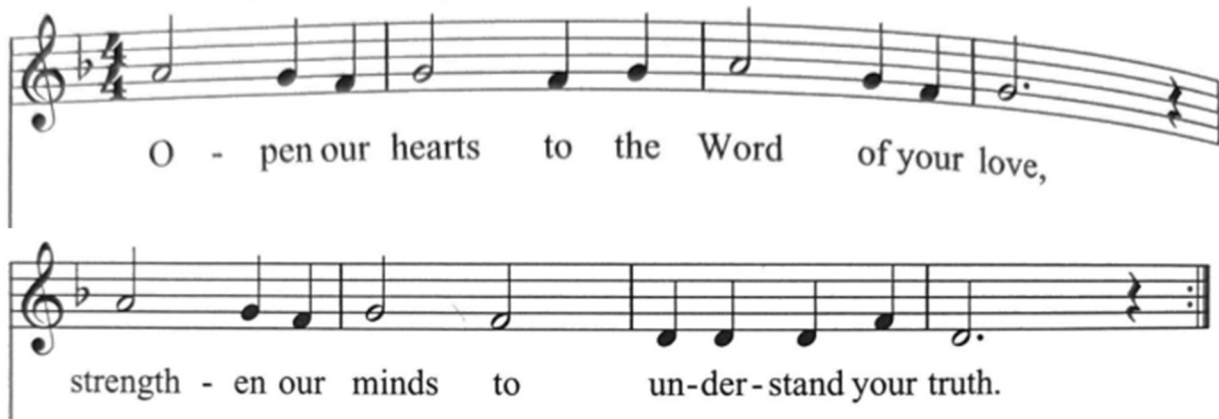
**God imagined us all. God loves each of us.**

Let us worship with the same imagination as the creating One!

**Amen.**

**\*OPENING HYMN (insert) – Open Our Hearts**

Words & Music by Joe Rowley



## **PASSING THE PEACE**

**SCRIPTURE READING** Genesis 1:1-5; 26-31

Rob Middleton

## **CHILDREN'S PAGEANT**

### **In The Image**

*\*Please join in singing on bold lyrics.\**

### ***It Was Good***

Words based on Genesis 1-2:3

Music by Mark Burrows

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,  
And the earth was shapeless and empty.  
And the Spirit of God moved upon the waters, and God said,  
"Let there be light."  
There became day and night...  
for there was light!*

*God created the sky up above for the rain and sleet and snow.  
God created the land and the seas and made trees and flowers grow.  
And it was good, so very good, good, good, good, good! It was good!*

*God created the sun and the moon and the stars beyond compare.  
God created the fish of the sea and the birds that fill the air.  
And it was good, so very good, good, good, good, good! It was good!*

*God created the bear and the bug and all creatures on the land.  
God created the people to care for the earth at God's command.  
And once creation had been blest, God took a day to get some rest.  
God always knows what's for the best!*

*And it was good, so very good, good, good, good, good! It was good!*

### ***Created to Create***

Words and Music by Mark Burrows

*You've got ideas floating in your head. Come on and let 'em out!  
No need to worry if they're good enough. No reason you should doubt.*

*You've got the heart, you've got the hands to play your part in God's big plans.  
We all should celebrate, 'cause you and I were created to create!*

*Create! A silly song or a recipe!  
Create! A story all about your family!  
Create! A brand new toy or a game to play!  
Create! A card to brighten someone's day!*

### ***All Things Bright and Beautiful***

ROYAL OAK

Words by Cecil Alexander

Music by Martin Shaw

***All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful, our dear God made them all.***

***The purple headed mountain, the river running by,  
The sunset, and the morning that brightens up the sky.  
All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,  
All things wise and wonderful, our dear God made them all.***

### ***Wonder-Beautiful***

Words based on Psalm 8

Music by Mark Burrows

*Thank you for making me. Please give me the faith to see that anything you touch  
can be wonder-beautiful.*

### ***The Heart-Song of God***

Words based on 1 John 4:12

Music by Mark Burrows

*God's face is loving. God's face is light.  
God's face is every face turned to meet a friend.  
God's voice is tender. God's voice is true.  
God's voice is every voice singing as one the heart-song of God,  
The heart-song of love without end.*

*No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us,  
And God's love is perfected in us.*

*God's hands are steady. God's hands are strong.  
God's hands are every hand reaching out to care.  
God's heart is goodness. God's heart is grace.  
God's heart is every heart beating as one the heart-song of God,  
The heart-song of love we all share.  
The heart-song of God.*

### ***In the Image***

SIYAHAMBA

Words by Mark Burrows

Music: South African folk song, tr. Anders Nyberg

***We are all made in the image of God. We are all made in the image of God.  
We are all made in the image of God. We are all made in the image of God.  
In the image of God, we are all made in the image of God.  
In the image of God, we are all made in the image of God.***

***We are living in the image of God. We are living in the image of God.  
We are living in the image of God. We are living in the image of God.  
In the image of God, we are living in the image of God.  
In the image of God, we are living in the image of God.***

***We are loving in the image of God. We are loving in the image of God.  
We are loving in the image of God. We are loving in the image of God.  
In the image of God, we are loving in the image of God.  
In the image of God, we are loving in the image of God.  
We are loving in the image of God!***

*Following the pageant, children are invited to go to Sunday School for the remainder of the service.*

## **A LITANY FOR MOTHER'S DAY**

Leader: Mothers come in many different forms, and today we celebrate them all!

**All: Thank God for mothers!**

Leader: Everyone here is somebody's child.

**All: Thank God for my mother!**

Leader: For mothers who have died, and whom we miss dearly here on earth.

**All: Thank God for the mothers of the past.**

Leader: For every woman who is working day and night to raise her children right now.

**All: Thank God for the mothers of today.**

Leader: For the women who took in others' children through adoption and foster care.

**All: Thank God for the mothers with hearts so big.**

Leader: We pray for mothers who have fled violence and difficult situations, including refugees, and who have been separated from their children, or face the daily violence of not being able to offer food and safety. For those women who have lost a child to death and must carry on.

**All: Thank God for the strength of mothers.**

Leader: For all the women who have desperately wanted to have children of their own, and those who play mothering roles beyond their own families.

**All: Thank God for the mothers in spirit.**

Leader: For all for whom this day is difficult, and those whose experience is beyond these words.

**All: We thank you, Lord, for the women who have influenced our lives in so many ways. We pray that we will honor them in everything we do.  
Amen.**

## 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

Jeremy Carlisle

### \*Response of Thanksgiving – Doxology

*GOODNESS*

Words: Thomas Ken, adapt. William B. Abernathy

Music: Paul M. Vasile

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

4

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

7

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

### \*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Holy God, giver of every gift, we pray that you would bless these offerings. Use us, and these gifts to the end that your realm may come and your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

### \*HYMN (insert) – Go Now in Peace, Worship Continues

*EARTH & STARS*

Words: Mary Bittner

Music: David Johnson

1 Go now in peace, wor - ship con - tin - ues;  
 2 Go now in joy: cel - e - brate liv - ing!  
 3 Go now in love. Led by Christ's teach - ing,

Em G D G

ser - vice be - gins as you go from this place.  
 Sing and praise God with re - joic - ing each day.  
 share with your neigh - bor the love that you know.

D G A D

Taught by God's Word, safe in God's tend - ing,  
 Lift - ed in hope, filled with thanks - giv - ing,  
 Gifts from the heart out - ward - ly reach - ing

Em G D G

hold to the path that will run the good race.  
 spread the good news as you go on your way.  
 car - ry love's mes - sage wher - ev - er you go.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 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

Jeremy Carlisle

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**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. Please stay for coffee hour in the Assembly Room immediately following the service.

### TAKING PLACE AFTER WORSHIP: BUDGET PRESENTATION FOR THE NEXT FISCAL YEAR IN THE GUILD ROOM AND ON ZOOM

The Zoom link for this presentation is listed on the homepage of the church website, [www.unioncong.org](http://www.unioncong.org), and in the online calendar listing.

**COFFEE HOUR** has been provided by Tawnya Switzer.

**LIVESTREAM VIDEO:** Nkenge Jones

**SOUND OPERATOR:** Joe Cristiani

**THANK YOU** to the Sunday Welcome Team, Adult Sanctuary Choir, Kristine Hart, Jeremy Whitener, the children, and the parents!

### THIS WEEK

**Tuesday, May 13**

**12:30pm Daytime Bible Study** (Guild Room)

**7pm Budget Discussion On Zoom Only** - The Zoom link is listed on the homepage of the church website, [www.unioncong.org](http://www.unioncong.org), and in the online calendar listing.

**Wednesday, May 14**

**10:30am Gentle Yoga** (Guild Room)

**7pm Handbell Rehearsal** (Sanctuary)



**7:30PM DOORS, 8PM PERFORMANCE: THE MOVING ARCHITECTS DANCE COMPANY ON FRIDAY, MAY 16 IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM**

Tickets: \$20 General Admission, Free for kids 10 & under.

Join The Moving Architects dance company for a special work-in-progress showing featuring their Crane House & Historic YWCA Performance Project! The event will include a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the project's choreography and development, with historical insight from Montclair History Center Executive Director Angelica Diggs and TMA Artistic Director Erin Carlisle Norton. The event will also feature a new dance film premiere and a performance by local community dancers from TMA's Performance Workshops. Drinks and snacks will be available for purchase to support the project.

<https://www.ticketleap.events/tickets/themovingarchitects/tmaMAYshowing>

**COME TO THE WOMEN'S BREAKFAST ON SATURDAY, MAY 17 AT 9AM IN THE ASSEMBLY ROOM. THE THEME IS "SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A BOOK?"**

The guest speaker Susan Alexander will be flying in from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg for our May Women's Breakfast on Saturday, May 17 at 9am. Susan's talk will give you insights about how a book gets written and what happens once it is finished. She is the author of 27 novels. Her writings focus on women who have led complex and interesting lives, their relationships, and the choices they have made. In addition to Susan's talk, a delicious breakfast will be served, with gluten-free options. Please RSVP to Karen Ermler, karen.ermler@gmail.com (or 973-820-6122) so that we can prepare enough food for the breakfast. A \$7.00 donation will be collected to cover the cost of the breakfast. Guests are always welcome!

**PARENT'S NIGHT OUT: SATURDAY, MAY 17<sup>TH</sup>**

Drop off starts at 5:30pm, and pick up by 8:45 pm. Union Cong staff and our high school volunteers will have pizza and a movie for them. Register on the sign-up page on the church website. Please note: children must be potty-trained.

**BE SURE TO STAY NEXT SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP:  
THE SANCTUARY CHOIR AND UCC RINGERS WILL PERFORM A SECOND  
HOUR CONCERT "ONLY IN SLEEP" SUNDAY, MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> IN THE SANCTUARY**

The concert is a musical exploration of our dreams and nightmares, and how they relate to our world and the world we hope to build. The concert will included a variety of songs, both sacred and secular that range from Eric Whittaker's *Sleep*, to *The Impossible Dream* from *Man Of La Mancha* to Aerosmith's *Dream On*. It will start promptly at 11:45am, and will last approximately 45 minutes. Don't miss the concert of your dreams!



# only in SLEEP

THE UCC RINGERS & SANCTUARY CHOIR  
present an afternoon of music by Aerosmith,  
Whitacre, Elvis, Joseph M. Martin and more.

SUNDAY MAY 18TH 11:30  
Union Congregational Church  
76 Cooper Ave.  
Montclair, NJ 07043

## **IN NEED OF COFFEE HOUR HOSTS FOR MAY AND JUNE**

Offering hospitality at coffee hour is one way we create space to be in community with one another and welcome visitors. Please use the sign up at the bottom of the church's homepage at [www.unioncong.org](http://www.unioncong.org) to let us know you will be bringing food for coffee hour (anything you want fruit, bagels, coffee cake).

## **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

### **Come To The Lantern Festival For Justice And Unity in Edgemont Park This Saturday, May 17th**

All are encouraged to attend AAPI's Lantern Festival in Edgemont Park. This event celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander culture, unity, and social justice with thousands of lanterns, art projects, community partners, food trucks, and live music. It is also a huge event for the neighborhood. From AAPI New Jersey's website about the festival theme: "we come together to reaffirm our shared values of diversity, belonging, and resilience, and uplift the dreams of our 1+ million strong AAPI community for a more inclusive future." The Pride Choir will be singing during the opening remarks of the festival. For more information, visit [www.aapinewjersey.org](http://www.aapinewjersey.org).

### **At Union Cong: Montclair Story Salon Show Raising Funds For Montclair HELPS On The Evening Of Wednesday, May 21st**

Montclair Story Salon is a multi-disciplinary storytelling event series hosted and produced by actress and Montclair resident Liz Samuel. These events feature storytellers, singer/songwriters, and an artist (painting live!) -- all in aid of non-profit organizations. The Pride Choir will be singing during the preshow reception between 6:30pm and 7pm. The May Salon will benefit Montclair HELPS.

## **CHURCH CONTACT INFO**

Rev. Katrina Forman, Lead Minister, 973-417-3409, [kforman@unioncong.org](mailto:kforman@unioncong.org)

Jon Thomsen, Executive Director, 973-744-7426, [jthomsen@unioncong.org](mailto:jthomsen@unioncong.org)

Rev. Marie A. Bacchiocchi, Minister Of Visitation And Pastoral Care, 732-874-0528, [mbacchiocchi@unioncong.org](mailto:mbacchiocchi@unioncong.org)

Kim Crabtree, Member Engagement and Communications Manager, 973-233-4563, [kcrabtree@unioncong.org](mailto:kcrabtree@unioncong.org)

Albert Fenske-Williams, Operations and Space Use Manager, 973-417-3408, [afenskewilliams@unioncong.org](mailto:afenskewilliams@unioncong.org)

BJ Carter, Interim Program Coordinator for Children and Youth, [bjcarter@unioncong.org](mailto:bjcarter@unioncong.org)

John David Whitener, Co-Music Director, 973-707-3248, [jwhitener@unioncong.org](mailto:jwhitener@unioncong.org)  
Jeremy Whitener, Co-Music Director, [jeremy@unioncong.org](mailto:jeremy@unioncong.org)