



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

August 10th, 2025

*Please rise in body or spirit.

You are invited to join in the liturgy **in bold type.**

*Childcare and Sunday School for ages 6 mos. – 5th grade is available.
Ushers can direct you there. Children are welcome to the activity
sheets, children's bulletins, and fidgets available in the back of the
sanctuary. If you would like to use the assistive listening system,
please see an usher or the table in the back of the sanctuary.*

PRELUDE – Bridge Over Troubled Water

Paul Simon

*When you're weary,
Feeling small,
When tears are in your eyes,
I will dry them all.
I'm on your side.
Oh, when times get rough,
And friends just can't be found.
Like a bridge over troubled
water,
I will lay me down.*

*When you're down and out,
When you're on the street,
When evening falls so hard
I will comfort you.
I'll take your part.
Oh, when darkness comes,
And pain is all around.
Like a bridge over troubled
water,
I will ease your mind.*

Meena Sandberg, Kevin Shaw, & Jeremy Carlisle

WELCOME

John David Whitener

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

John David Whitener

One: Welcome this day to the house of our God.

All: We are greeted in peace and in love.

One: Welcome this day to the worship of our Creator.

All: We worship in hope and with grace.

One: Welcome this day to our community of faith,

All: Where we are siblings in Christ.

One: Friends, let us worship God.

Words: Laurie Zelman

know my_ words, be - fore they're said. You know my need and
I should fly_ be - yond the_ dawn, the shad - ows will_ not
ev - ery_ thought, each word we say, the whole of_ time, the
mend my_ heart and free my voice. From sin re - leased, I

E/G# Esus A F#7/A# Bm F#m7 G Am D7 Gadd9

I am fed. You give me life. You know my ways, my
o - ver - come. If I lie down in deep - est night, still
pre - sent day, are held with - in your might - y hand too
will re - joice. O search me now, my spir - it cries, and

strength, my path_ for all my_ days, my strength, my_ path, for
 you are_ there, my truth, my_ light, still you are_ there, my
 won - der - ful_ to com - pre - hend, too won - der - ful_ to
 let my_ song of praise a - rise_ and let my_ song of

Asus N.C. A⁷sus Asus N.C. Dadd9

1.2.3. 4.

all my days.____ 2. If praise a - rise.____
truth, my light.____ 3. Our com-pre - hend.____
com-pre - hend.____ 4. O

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (responsive) John David Whitener
The apostle Paul once wrote, "I do not do the good I want." That is the beginning of confession, for Paul and for all of us. Let us come before God with the truth of our lives.

One: For not loving You with all our heart, O God;

All: For not loving our neighbor in the same way;

For not loving You with our whole soul, O God;

For not loving our neighbor in the same way;

For not loving You with our minds, O God;

For not loving our neighbor in the same way;

For not loving You with all our strength, O God;

For not loving You in the same way:

Forgive us, and show us Your kindness, that we might do the same.

One: Let us offer God our prayers in silence.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE (responsive) John David Whitener

One: God is not hate, God is not wrath, God is not apathy.

All: God is love.

One: And that means that God forgives, again and again.

All: Thanks be to God! Alleluia, Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

John David Whitener

**SCRIPTURE – Isaiah 1:11-17 &
Matthew 22:34-40**

Scott Randel

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

Jeremy Whitener

SERMON – This I Believe

Tim Crist

***HYMN #286 – Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness**

SPIRIT

Words & Music: James K. Manley

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

John David Whitener

Joys and Concerns

Hohn and Stover Families

Lee Montgomery

Roseann Wallace, mother-in-law of Marcie, mom to Dave

Jordon Bronson

Joan and Bill Icklan

Doris Brett

Litany of Intercession NCH 878 (responsive)

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

John David Whitener

Announcements

Invitation

One: Let us present with joy our offerings of commitment and support for the work of Christ's church.

All: Let us prepare Christ's table with the offerings of our life and labor.

Music for Meditation

Jeremy Carlisle

***Response NCH 562 – Take My Gifts (vs. 3)**

Words: Shirley Erena Murray

TALavera TERRACE

Music: Colin Gibson

***Take whatever I can offer – gifts that I have yet to find,
Skills that I am slow to sharpen, talents of the hand and mind,
Things made beautiful for others in the place where I must be:
Take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.***

***Prayer of Dedication & Thanksgiving (unison)**
God, we present these offerings that they may be used to extend your liberating reign. With them, we offer our varied ministries in the days ahead that each of us may be part of your answer to the cries of the world. Amen.

***HYMN #423 – Great Is Your Faithfulness (vs. 1, 2)**

FAITHFULNESS

Words: Thomas O. Chisholm

Music: William M. Runyan

***BENEDICTION**

Tim Crist

One: We have worshiped God together.

All: As our worship ends, our service begins.

One: May the spirit which has blessed us here

All: Continue to bless us in each day that comes! Amen.

POSTLUDE – How Great Thou Art

Trad., arr. Dan Forrest

*O Lord my God! How great Thou art!
O Lord my God when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout The universe displayed.*

*Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee;
How great Thou art, How great Thou art!*

*When thru the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly*

*in the trees,
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze,
Then sing my soul, How great Thou art!*

*You made us all, each gender, shape, and story.
Queer, straight, and trans, all sacred in your eyes.
No church, no law can steal a person's glory
Your boundless love affirms our lives!
Then sings my soul, How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
O Lord, my God, how great Thou art!*

*When Christ shall come
With shout of acclamation
And take me home,
What joy shall fill my heart!*

*Then I shall bow
In humble adoration
And there proclaim,
My God, how great Thou art!*

Jeremy Whitener & Jeremy Carlisle

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 are invited to stay for fellowship following the service in the Assembly Room.

LIVESTREAM VIDEO: Kim Crabtree, **SOUND OPERATOR:** Joe Cristiani

THANK YOU Sunday Welcome Team, Tim, John David, Jeremy, Scott, and our music ministry!

JOIN GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TODAY AT 3PM FOR THEIR INSTALLATION OF THEIR NEWLY CALLED MINISTER, REV. CINDY WILCOX, IN THE SANCTUARY.

HELP US PREPARE FOR REV. LEAH'S ARRIVAL – SEND YOUR SUGGESTIONS TO JEN HAND BY THIS TUESDAY, AUGUST 12
Help us give Rev. Leah a warm welcome! Living in NJ will be new for Leah, but she loves to explore. Let's give her a head start by sharing our favorite local restaurants, things to do in NYC, and hikes. Please send your favorites to Jen Hand (jennyjohand@gmail.com) by this Tuesday, August 12th, and we will add those to a NJ-themed welcome basket to present when she arrives. In mid-August, Rev. Leah will settle into the parsonage, focusing on getting to know the area and tackling the many tasks related to a cross-country move. During this time you may see her on campus, and while you should say hello, please keep in mind that her official start date is September 8th. She will join us in worship on September 14th.

THIS FRIDAY, AUGUST 15 AT 4PM:

Join members of Grace Presbyterian Church For Their "Church Rebuild Worship Service" On The Grounds Of Grace Presbyterian Church

Congregants, neighbors, community leaders, and members are welcome to gather on Grace Presbyterian's church lawn for a service to mark the second anniversary of the church fire, and get a glimpse into the exciting rebuilding of the church. (153 Grove Street, Montclair)

FAMILY PROMISE SEEKS DONATIONS OF FURNITURE AND RESIDENCE ITEMS:

Family Promise is excited to share that FPE is partnering with a landlord in West Orange to establish a temporary, scattered-site residence for families in our shelter program. Check today's email for apartment items that are needed to fill these residences.

PRIDE CHOIR REHEARSAL RESUMES ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 17 AT 2PM/CHOIR 101 AT 1:30PM

The Pride Choir is excited to kick off its' THIRD season with rehearsal on Sunday, August 17th at 2pm. Pride Choir is an inclusive LGBTQ+ community choir, a safe space for people to gather, be celebrated, and make music together. The choir was launched with and continues to have support from the church and church members. Those who want a choir refresher can join Jeremy at 1:30pm for Choir 101. The choir has had lots of fun posts and engagements recently on their Instagram, follow them at @pridechoir.

LET'S READ WITH THE RACIAL JUSTICE TEAM - *Just Action: How to Challenge Segregation Enacted Under the Color of Law*

Members and friends of the church are invited to join in the summer congregational read, *Just Action: How to Challenge Segregation Enacted Under the Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein and Leah Rothstein. The book is widely available from public libraries and booksellers. There is ample time to read the book before early September, when Sally St. John will lead a congregational discussion. Contact Ina Isobe (ina.isobe@gmail.com) with any questions.

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

Rev. Marie A. Bacchiocchi, Minister Of Visitation And Pastoral Care,
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BJ Carter, Sunday School Coordinator, bjcarter@unioncong.org

John David Whitener, Co-Music Director, 973-707-3248,
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Jeremy Whitener, Co-Music Director, jeremy@unioncong.org

ABOUT UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Union Congregational Church exists to provide opportunities for anyone who wants to connect with God through worship, service, education, and small groups. Typically, you'll find members and friends seeking wisdom, searching for movements of the Spirit, serving others, and having fun together. Anyone is invited to join us, ask questions, and most importantly, be yourself. Union Congregational Church is a congregation of people from all walks of life and faith traditions.

The church community commits to welcoming, including, and celebrating people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. Union Congregational Church proudly embraces LGBTQ+ people into the full life and ministry of the church. As part of the United Church of Christ, our denomination, this is called being an "Open and Affirming" church.

Children's Book Drive

We need kids' books!

Donate to Toni's Kitchen during hours open to the public. **No chapter books**, please! We most commonly see kids ages 1-10 (who often speak both Spanish and English). Blank workbooks, baby books, and card games also accepted.



August 1st -
September 10th
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kitchen

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