



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

July 20th, 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.*

PRELUDE – The Gift of Love

arr. Hal H. Hopson

*Though I may speak with
bravest fire,
And have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love, my words
are vain,
As sounding brass, and hopeless
gain.*

*The profit soon turns strangely
thin.*

*Come, Spirit, come, our hearts
control,
Our spirits long to be made
whole.*

*Though I may give all I possess,
And striving so my love profess,
But not be given by love within,*

*Let inward love guide every
deed;
By this we worship and are
freed.*

Janet Aldrich & Laurie Walle

WELCOME

Tim Crist

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Tim Crist

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.

***OPENING HYMN – Let's Walk Together**

WELCOME

Words: Laurie Zelman

Music: Mark A. Miller

1 Let's walk to-gether for a while, and ask where
 2 Let's talk to-gether of a time when we will
 3 Let's dream to-gether of the day when earth and

we be - gin to build a world where love can grow,
 share a feast, where pride and pow - er kneel to serve
 heav'n are one, a cit - y built of love and light,

and hope can en - ter in, to be the hands of
 the lone - ly and the least, and joy will set the
 the new Je - ru - sa - lem, where mourn-ing turns to

heal - ing, and to plant the seed of peace,
 ta - ble as we join our hands to pray,
 danc - ing, ev - 'ry crea - ture lifts its voice,

sing-ing wel - come, wel-come to this place. You're in -
 vit - ed to come and know God's grace. All are
 wel - come, the love of God to share, 'cause
 all of us are wel - come here;
 all are wel - come in this place.

(☺) Last time

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (responsive)

Tim Crist

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)

Tim Crist

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

Tim Crist

SCRIPTURE – Mark 12:28-34

Janet Aldrich

MESSAGE FOR ALL AGES

BJ Carter

SERMON – The Ripple Effect of Kindness

Karen Olson

***HYMN (insert) – Whatsoever You Do**

Words & Music: Willard F. Jasbusch

REFRAIN

What-so - ev - er you do to the least of my peo - ple, that you

VERSES

do un - to me.

1. When I was hun - gry, you gave me to
2. When I was home - less, you o - pened your
3. When I was wea - ry, you helped me find
4. When in a pris - on, you came to my
5. When I was laughed at, you stood by my

1. eat; When I was thirst - y, you gave me to drink.
2. door; When I was na - ked, you gave me your coat.
3. rest; When I was anx - ious, you calmed all my fears.
4. cell; When on a sick - bed, you cared for my needs.
5. side; When I was hap - py, you shared in my joy.

1-5. Now en - ter in - to the home of my Fa - ther.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Tim Crist

Joys and Concerns

Leana Greene – John David Whitener's sister

Sam DeVirglio

Joan and Bill Icklan

Jordan Bronson

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

Tim Crist

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 – If I Can Help Somebody Alma Androzzo

*If I can help somebody as I pass
along,*

*If I can cheer somebody with a
word or a song,*

*If I can show somebody they
are travelling wrong,*

*Then my living shall not be in
vain.*

*If I can do my duty as a
Christian ought,*

*If I can bring back beauty to a
world up wrought,*

*If I can spread love's message
that our Creator taught,*

*Then my living shall not be in
vain.*

Janet Aldrich & Laurie Walle

***Response NCH 562 – Take My Gifts (vs. 3)** TALAVERA TERRACE
Words: Shirley Erena Murray 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.**

***CLOSING HYMN #451 – Be Now My Vision** SLANE
Words: Mary Byrne Music: Traditional Irish melody

***BENEDICTION** Karen Olson
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 – Let the Bright Seraphim from *Samson* Handel
Laurie Walle

RESOURCES USED IN TODAY'S LITURGY:

Adapted from Beth Merrill Neel on her blog, 'Hold Fast to What Is Good'. Used with permission. Reprinted from *Book of Worship* © 2006 by United Church of Christ, Cleveland, Ohio.

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 shared fellowship with Grace Presbyterian Church following the service in the Assembly Room.

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

THANK YOU Sunday Welcome Team, Karen Olson, Tim, Janet, and Laurie!

JULY CHURCH GATHERINGS AND EVENTS

Wednesday, July 23

6pm Women's Summer Dinner And A Movie (Assembly Room)

The Women of Union have planned a dinner followed by the movie "Wicked." We will have salmon, shrimp, summer salads, and "Pink and Green Desserts." Attendees are encouraged to wear "pink" or "green!" Guests are always welcome! Please RSVP to Karen Ermler, karen.ermler@gmail.com, 973-820-6122, by the end of the day today, Sunday, July 20, so that we can order enough food. A \$15.00 donation is asked to cover the cost of the dinner. This will be collected at the door.

Let's Read With The Racial Justice Ministry 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, and there are a limited number of free copies as well. There is ample time to read the book before early September, when Sally St. John will lead a congregational discussion. Mid-month, the Montclair Public Library Open Book/Open Mind series will bring the authors to speak in person on Wednesday, September 10 at First Congregational Church at 7:00 pm (see today's email for the registration link). Contact Ina Isobe (ina.isobe@gmail.com) with any questions.

CHURCH CONTACT INFO

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