

Living
into the
Promise



UNION CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*We welcome all people to experience God's love,
grow spiritually and engage in meaningful service.*

SERVICE OF THE WORD

August 10, 2025

*Please stand as you are able.

This service is livestreaming. Thank you. ❤️

ENTER TO WORSHIP

GATHERING MUSIC

*When you hear the music, please gather. Be seated and prepare for worship.
Lighting the Candle, we remember God's presence with us.*

PRELUDE "Joyful, Joyful We Adore You" Arr. Shirley Norwood

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Words of Welcome & Announcements

INTROIT A Contemporary Medley Summer Singers Ensemble
"10 Thousand Reasons" - "Way Maker" - "Hallelujah" - "Believe For It"

Greeting One Another

***No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.***

*Chorus:

***We are one in the bond of love; we are one in the bond of love, we have joined our
spirits with the Spirit of God, we are one in the bond of love.***

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: All day long, God calls to Earth.

All: All day long, Earth answers.

One: The rivers run, and grasses blow, sand shifts and shifts again. Lava
churns deep within Earth.

All: All day long, God calls to Earth.

One: All day long, Earth answers.

**All: Ocean tides rush in and out, and creatures swim along. Trees bend and
straighten, and mountains sing the song of the ancients.**

One: All day long, God calls to Earth.

All: All day long, Earth answers.

One: Dusk to dawn, day to night, six days turn to seven.

All: All day long, God calls to Earth.

One: All day long, Earth answers.

All: God's people come together, friend and stranger. Let us join with all creation in praising our wondrous God.

One: All day long, God calls to Earth.

All: All day long, Earth answers.

One: Come, let us worship God.

INVOCATION

Christ is with us!

Christ is in our midst!

The inner workings of our minds are amazing, God. Our thoughts and insights, actions and ideas create possibilities that become clearer and more defined as we look with intent in response to your call. As we gather together and look through the windows that open to life-giving, just, and faithful pathways, enlarge our faith that we might step beyond our places of comfort, assured that our actions will reveal your life-giving grace. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE** "Great Is Your Faithfulness"

PASTORAL PRAYER

Sharing Joys and Concerns

"Back-to-School" Blessing

(All students, educators, and parents to come forward for a blessing.)

Students: Dear God, I ask for Your help as I begin this new school year. Allow me to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before me. Open my eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings. Open my heart and mind to new friends and new teachers.

All: Hear their prayers, O God. Amen.

Our Father, 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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYER RESPONSE

"Sweet Hour of Prayer" Summer Handbells Ensemble

OFFERTORY

"Love Lifted Me"

Summer Singers Ensemble

**I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more;
But the Master of the sea heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me—now safe am I.**

Refrain: **Love lifted me, love lifted me, when nothing else could help,
Love lifted me; love lifted me, love lifted me,
When nothing else could help, love lifted me.**

**All my heart to Him I give, ever to Him I'll cling,
In His blessed presence live, ever His praises sing.
Love so mighty and so true merits my soul's best songs;
Faithful, loving service, too, to Him belongs. [Refrain]**

***DOXOLOGY** (*Deacons Joanna & Brandon to bring offerings forward.*)

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that Love has done:
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.***

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT**

(All children and youth are welcome to attend the Sunday School Class.)

READING OF SCRIPTURES

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better

country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

Psalms 50:1-8, 22-23

The mighty one, God the Sovereign, speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.

Our God comes and does not keep silence,
before God is a devouring fire,
and a mighty tempest all around.

God calls to the heavens above and to the earth,
that God may judge God's people:

"Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"

The heavens declare God's righteousness,
for God indeed is judge.

"Hear, O my people, and I will speak,
O Israel, I will testify against you for I am God, your God.

"Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.

"Mark this, then, you who forget God,
or I will tear you apart, and there will be no one to deliver.

"Those who bring thanksgiving as their sacrifice honor me;
to those who go the right way I will show the salvation of God."

Luke 12:32-40

"What I'm trying to do here is get you to relax, not be so preoccupied with *getting* so you can respond to God's *giving*. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep yourself in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. Don't be afraid of missing out. You're my dearest friends! The Father wants to give you the very kingdom itself.

"Be generous. Give to the poor. Get yourselves a bank that can't go bankrupt, a bank in heaven far from bankrobbers, safe from embezzlers, a bank you can bank on. It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being. "Keep your shirts on; keep the lights on! Be like house servants waiting for their master to come back from his honeymoon, awake and ready to open the door when he arrives and knocks. Lucky the servants whom the master finds on watch! He'll put on an apron, sit them at the table, and serve them a meal, sharing his wedding feast with them. It doesn't matter what time of the night he arrives; they're awake—and so blessed!

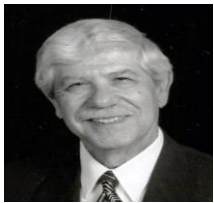
"You know that if the house owner had known what night the burglar was coming, he wouldn't have stayed out late and left the place unlocked. So don't you be slovenly and careless. Just when you don't expect him, the Son of Man will show up."

This is the word of life.

Thanks be to God!

SONG OF PREPARATION	"Glory, Glory, Hallelujah"	Arr. Howard Helvey Pastor Sheila & Tom Richards
SERMON	"Living Into the Promise"	Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey
*CLOSING HYMN	"Blessed Assurance"	
*COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION		
POSTLUDE	"How Great Thou Art"	Arr. Shirley Norwood

DEPART TO SERVE



Our dear friend, **Rod Jennings** passed away on June 26, 2025. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at Union in his memory on **August 24 at 12PM** followed by a **"Wine Toast."** Let us continue to hold Ron's family and friends in our prayers.

SAVE THE DATE

**September 7, 2025 @ Union
Youth "PEACE" Talks!**



**PEACE organizer, Megan, will
engage with the Youth at Union
& Jupiter First on what it means
to be a part of PEACE.**



NEWSLETTER REMINDER

Don't forget to submit any articles/news/
pictures and/or announcements for the September Newsletter
by Tuesday, September 2, 2025. Please send them email to:
zaida@unionucc.net. Thank you!



We **WELCOME** each of you to this celebration of worship. If you are visiting, we invite you to sign our Guest register in the Narthex. Offering envelopes are found in the pocket on the back of the chairs in the sanctuary for your convenience.

Participating in Today's Service:

Readers

Dorothy Bates, George Gerson, Rebekah Gay

Deacon Assisting

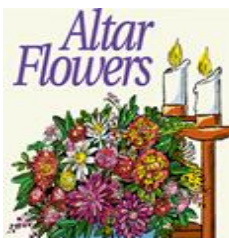
George Gerson

Union's Joys & Prayer Concerns

Joys: All Birthdays in August! Our Church Family! Live Streaming! Back to School Sundaes!

Concerns:

Tom Richards; Linda Padmore's family & friends; Rod Jennings's family & friends; Marion Gaetano's family & friends; Jane Grandusky's husband, Mark; Bonnie Avery's family and friends; Teresa Byrd; Lynn McNaughton's mom and cousin, Cade; Linda Padmore's daughter, Jeannine; Linda Harvey; Susan Young's sister, Genie; Kirk Dorhout; Evelyn Chouris; Charlotte Snowden; Renna McGinnis; Beth White's family & friends; Frank Byrd's family & friends; Melanie Shepherd; Ada Harvey and family; Charlene Buck; Linda Padmore's niece, Yvette & sister, Christine; Rosemarie Lightfoots's sister, Anita; Beth White; Louise's friend, Martha; Donna's brother, Clevert; George Gerson's Brother, Michael; Melanie's Friend, Donna; Borjana's son, Petar; Ruth Deischer's sister-in-law, Susan Deischer; Renna McGinnis; George Gerson's friends, Diane & Timothy Scott; George Gerson's nephew, Glenn; Ruth Cassidy's husband, Bill; Rose's daughter, Tyshawna for healing & recovery; Jan Mark; Rod Jennings; Jan Mark's son, Gary; Justice & Peace efforts; grieving, depression and anxiety; all refugees; Ukraine War; Puerto Rico; Haiti; Gun violence everywhere; Environmental concerns; Maui, HI, Florida; Israel conflict; Hurricane victims; Wild fires; Immigrant families; Attack on DEI; Medicaid & Food Assistance Programs



Every Sunday beautiful flowers adorn our altar. We have a flower chart for sign-ups. Also, you can call the office or send an email to office@unionucc.net. Garden flowers are \$10 and floral arrangements are \$40. As an added bonus you can list the flowers in the bulletin in memory or in honor of someone or a special occasion. You are also welcome to take the \$40 arrangement home.

Sunday School Highlight

Today is Back-to-School Sunday! This is one way we mark time. We celebrate the end of one thing and the beginning of another. Jesus talks about that in today's scripture reading, encouraging his disciples and us to find meaningful practices to stay connected to God and to care for one another. Come join the class!



Lam. 3:22-23

Thomas O. Chisholm, 1923; alt.

1 Great is your faith - ful - ness, O God, Cre - a - tor,*
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest,
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace so en - dur - ing,

with you no shad - ow of turn - ing we see.
 sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove,
 your own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide.

You do not change, your com - pas - sions they fail not;
 Join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness
 Strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row,

all of your good - ness for - ev - er will be.
 to your great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.
 bless - ings all mine with ten thou - sand be - side.

Summer Hymn Sing & Handbell Performances!!



ALL ARE INVITED

Today, Sunday, August 10, 2025

Join us for Union's Summer

"Hymn Sing" & "Handbell Ensemble"
performances today.



BACK TO SCHOOL



ICE CREAM SOCIAL

ALL ARE WELCOME!



TODAY, AUGUST 10, 2025



DURING FELLOWSHIP HOUR!

**THE FLORIDA CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
GEOGRAPHICAL AREA GATHERING**

~Ft. Lauderdale UCC~

Saturday September 6, 2025

10am - 3pm

2501 NE 30th ST Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306

Imagining Possibilities
Connect • Empower • Engage

Acts 17:30-31; Rev. 7:9-14

Fanny Crosby, 1873; alt.

1 Bless-ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine! O what a
 2 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, per - fect de - light! Vi - sions of
 3 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, all is at rest, I in my

fore - taste of glo - ry di - vine! Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of
 rap - ture now burst on my sight; An - gels de - scend - ing, bring from a -
 Sav - ior am hap - py and blessed; Watch - ing and wait - ing, look - ing a -

God, born of the Spir - it, washed in Christ's blood.
 bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
 bove, filled with God's good - ness, lost in Christ's love.

Refrain

This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long;

UNION CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
5088 SUMMIT BLVD, WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33415

Ministers of the Church
Pastor
Sunday School Teacher
Guest Musician
Vocalists

All of Us
Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey
Rev. Michael-Ann Veziroglu
Shirley Norwood
Tom Richards
Michelle Benght
Vanie Joseph

Sexton
Email Address: Pastor Sheila sheila@unionucc.net
Office - Zaida Pacheco zaida@unionucc.net / office@unionucc.net
Union Congregational Church, UCC: unionucc.net
Florida Conference, UCC www.uccfla.org
National UCC: www.ucc.org

Office Phone: 561-686-0330 - please leave a message.
Go to **www.unionucc.net** to see more of our news.

THIS WEEK AT UNION UCC

Sunday, August 10, 2025 Back to School "Sundae"

10:00 AM Worship – Facebook Live Streaming
11:15 AM Fellowship - All are welcome!
12:30 PM Depart Church for Norton Museum of Art Tour!

Tuesday - Friday – The Sanctuary is Available for Prayer!

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Open during office hours!

Sunday, August 17, 2025

10:00 AM Worship – Facebook Live Streaming
11:15 AM Fellowship - All are welcome!



Union's Youth & Children
have been invited to tour
the Norton Museum of Art
today, August 10, 2025.

TO OUR STUDENTS AT UNION:



August 10, 2025

Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16

Living into the Promise

There was a woman in my rural congregation who every year would win a handful of blue ribbons for the flower arrangements entered at the county fair. I was told that every flower used came from her garden, which everyone described as “magical.” I had to see this for myself.

One day I stopped by and there she was watering lush pink peonies. I was in awe by the beauty all around and admitted to her that nothing ever grew for me. I even confessed my lack of faith, doubting that a seed would grow each time I covered it with dirt.

She looked at me with shocked eyes, scolding me that my lack of faith was the very thing preventing me from a beautiful garden.

“Remember, pastor, faith is in things hoped for and in things unseen,” she said, citing scripture from Hebrews.

As she filled her rusty watering can from the just as rusty hand pump, she shared with me her secret to gardening.

“I put every seed, sapling and bulb into the ground, trusting that the beauty I cannot see will burst forth,” she said.

Could it be that faith was all I needed to turn my pitiful flowerbeds into a scene worthy of Monet to paint.

When this master gardener quoted Hebrews to me, I was reminded of all God’s children who “by faith” stepped forward to do things that seemed impossible. By faith, Noah built an ark. By faith, Abraham left his home for a new one. By faith, Sarah, his wife, bore a son even though her childbearing days were far behind her. By faith is how they lived, trusting God with a beautiful future even when that future could not be seen.

Today, that magical garden is gone, as are all the artistic flower arrangements that came from it. The hands of the one who planted each seed “by faith” is now tending to heavenly gardens. As for me, I am trying my best to have faith in the seeds I now plant.

For without faith, where would all the great gardens be? Without faith, where would all the great testimonies of ordinary people doing extraordinary things be?

And who knows? Maybe someday the roll call of faith will read, “By faith, a pastor finally grew a beautiful flower.”

God of beauty and grace, help us live more “by faith” this day, holding on always to hope and trusting in all things unseen. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today’s Sunday Bulletin.)