

A photograph of a dense forest canopy shaped like a heart, set against a bright blue sky with soft white clouds. The heart shape is formed by the collective green tops of many trees. The text "Growing in God's Love" is centered over the heart in a white serif font.

Growing
in God's
Love



**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

JUST PEACE SUNDAY

September 14, 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

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Arr. Shirley Norwood

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Words of Welcome & Announcements

INTROIT

"Come By Here, My Lord"

**Come by here, my Lord, come by here. Come by here, my Lord,
come by here. Come by here, my Lord, come by here. Oh Lord, come by
here.**

**Someone needs you, Lord, come by here. Someone needs you, Lord,
come by here. Someone needs you, Lord, come by here. Oh Lord, come by
here.**

**Someone's prayin', Lord, come by here. Someone's prayin', Lord,
come by here. Someone's prayin', Lord, come by here. Oh, Lord, come by
here.**

**Kum Ba Yah, my Lord, come by here. Kum Ba Yah, my Lord, come by here.
Kum Ba Yah, my Lord, come by here. Oh, Lord, come by here.**

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: God, maker of plants and animals and all things, invites us to this place.

All: We are glad to be here.

One: God, who has created all things for our goodness, invites us to this place.

All: We are glad to be here.

One: God, who has called us to care for Earth and all its inhabitants, invites us to this place.

All: We are glad to be here. Come, let us worship God!

INVOCATION

Christ is with us!

Christ is in our midst!

Creator God, we are awed by the creation you have made – the plants and animals (including humans) that you have placed within this world. In this time of worship, may we be aware of the gifts of flora and fauna to Creation, and all created things. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

“For the Beauty of the Earth”

PASTORAL PRAYER

Sharing Joys and Concerns

JUST PEACE SUNDAY PRAYER

Justice & Peace Team

STILL, WE RISE (Inspired By Maya Angelou's Poem, **Still, I Rise**)

By Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey

At times, life's unjust and tumultuous circumstances can shrink our faith into becoming the size of a tiny mustard seed, and yet, God's faithfulness helps us to say...

Still, we rise!

Even in the wake of violence and hatred that has plagued our nation, it is our trust in God that gives us the courage to say with love...

Still, we rise!

Christ taught us how to love, which disarms hate when joining together as neighbors alongside those living in cities and towns near and far who are mourning the loss of loved ones, and offering to us the wisdom to say with hope...

Still, we rise!

For it is by faith that we believe peace is possible and can be attained as God's kingdom here on earth, by opening our hearts to love our neighbor with acts of justice and mercy, and believing that we are all equally children of God by saying...

We rise! We rise! We rise!

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

"Believe for It"

Arr. CeCe Winans
Michelle Benght

**Move the immovable
Break the unbreakable
God, we believe
God, we believe for it
From the impossible
We'll see a miracle
God, we believe
God, we believe for it. (Refrain)**

OFFERTORY MOMENT

"PEACE" Partners

Paula Dorhourt
Justice & Peace Team

Song: "This Little Light of Mine/This Joy, I Have"

***DOXOLOGY** (*Deacons Vanessa & Isaac 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

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28

At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me out of the bare heights in the desert toward my poor people, not to winnow or cleanse—a wind too strong for that. Now it is I who speak in judgment against them. "For my people are foolish, they do not know me; they are stupid children, they have no understanding. They are skilled in doing evil, but do not know how to do good." I looked on the earth, and lo, it was waste and void; and to the heavens, and they had no light. I looked on the mountains, and lo, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. I looked, and lo, there was no one at all, and all the birds of the air had fled.

I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins before the LORD, before his fierce anger.

For thus says the LORD: The whole land shall be a desolation; yet I will not make a full end. Because of this the earth shall mourn, and the heavens above grow black; for I have spoken, I have purposed; I have not relented nor will I turn back.

PSALM 14

Fools say in their hearts, "There is no God."

They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is no one who does good.
God looks down from heaven on humankind

to see if there are any who are wise, who seek after God.

They have all gone astray, they are all alike perverse;

there is no one who does good, no, not one.

Have they no knowledge, all the evildoers who eat up my people as they eat bread,
and do not call upon God?

There they shall be in great terror,

for God is with the company of the righteous.

You would confound the plans of the poor,

but God is their refuge.

O that deliverance for Israel

would come from Zion!

When God restores the fortunes of God's people,

Jacob will rejoice; Israel will be glad.

1 Timothy 1:12-19

I'm so grateful to Christ Jesus for making me adequate to do this work. He went out on a limb, you know, in trusting me with this ministry. The only credentials I brought to it were invective and witch hunts and arrogance. But I was treated mercifully because I didn't know what I was doing—didn't know Who I was doing it against! Grace mixed with faith and love poured over me and into me. And all because of Jesus. Here's a word you can take to heart and depend on: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. I'm proof—Public Sinner Number One—of someone who could never have made it apart from sheer mercy. And now he shows me off—evidence of his endless patience—to those who are right on the edge of trusting him forever. Deep honor and bright glory to the King of All Time— One God, Immortal, Invisible, ever and always.

Thanks be to God!

SONG OF PREPARATION

"What A Friend"

Arr. Mary McDonald
Tom Richards & Pastor Sheila

SERMON

"Growing in God's Love"

Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey

***CLOSING HYMN**

"When Peace, Like a River"

***COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

"Let There Be Peace On Earth"

Arr. Shirley Norwood

DEPART TO SERVE



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 September! Our Church Family! Live Streaming!
Just Peace Sunday!

Concerns:

Timothy Blood; Tom Richards's sister, Cindy Richards-Wallace & his friend, Jackie Sloan; Jan Mark; Ada Harvey's grandson, Grant; David Ramirez; Irv Koehler; 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; Lin 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; 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; Palestinians; Hurricane victims; Wild fires; Immigrant families; Attack on DEI; Medicaid & Food Assistance Programs



**Flowers are presented by John Webster
For Helen & Joseph Webster.**



Sunday School Highlight

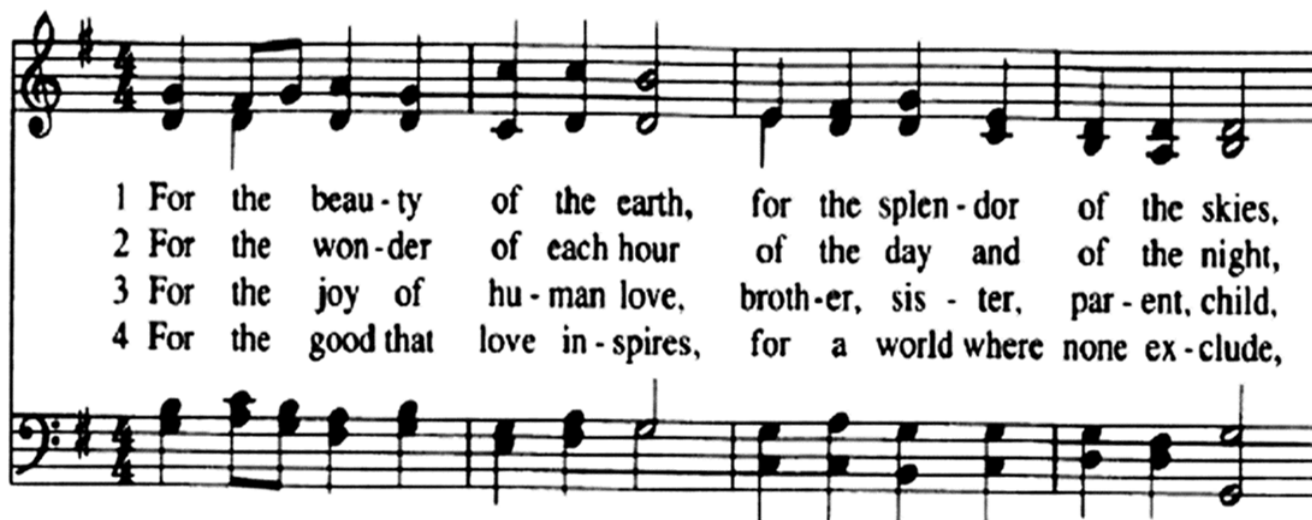
The lost sheep... the lost coin... two stories that Jesus tells to remind us of the joy and love God has in us. Come to Sunday School and let's celebrate! Come to Sunday School and let's learn how to include, support, and appreciate those in our lives! Come to Sunday School and let's be creative, reflective, and welcoming!



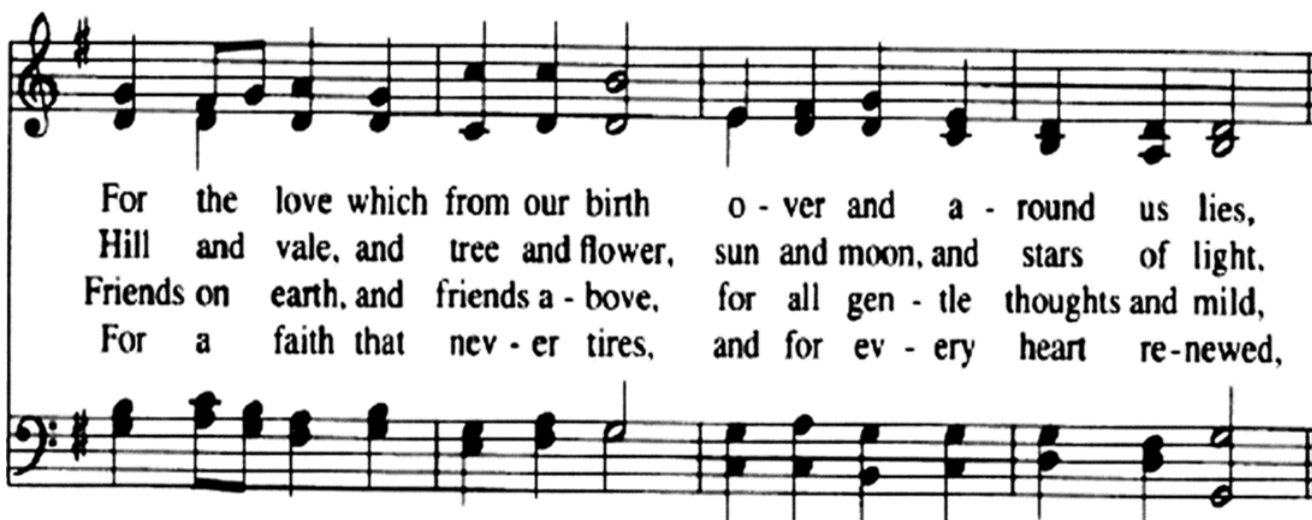
For the Beauty of the Earth

St. 1-3, Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1864; alt.

St. 4, Miriam Therese Winter, 1993



1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the splen - dor of the skies,
 2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
 3 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
 4 For the good that love in - spires, for a world where none ex - clude,



For the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies,
 Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
 Friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild,
 For a faith that nev - er tires, and for ev - ery heart re - newed,

Refrain



God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.



NEWSLETTER REMINDER

Don't forget to submit any articles/news/
 pictures and/or announcements for the September
 Newsletter by Tuesday, September 30, 2025. Please
 send them email to: zaida@unionucc.net. Thank you!

This Little Light/This Joy I Have

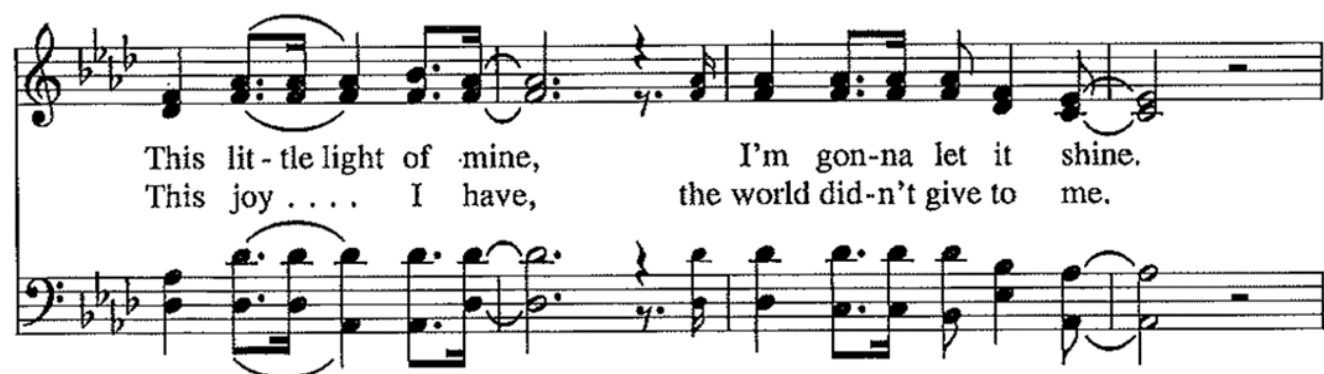
Matt. 5:14-16

African-American spiritual



1 This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine.
 1 This . . . joy I have, the world did-n't give to me.

I am gon - na let it, let it shine,
 oh, the world did not give to me,

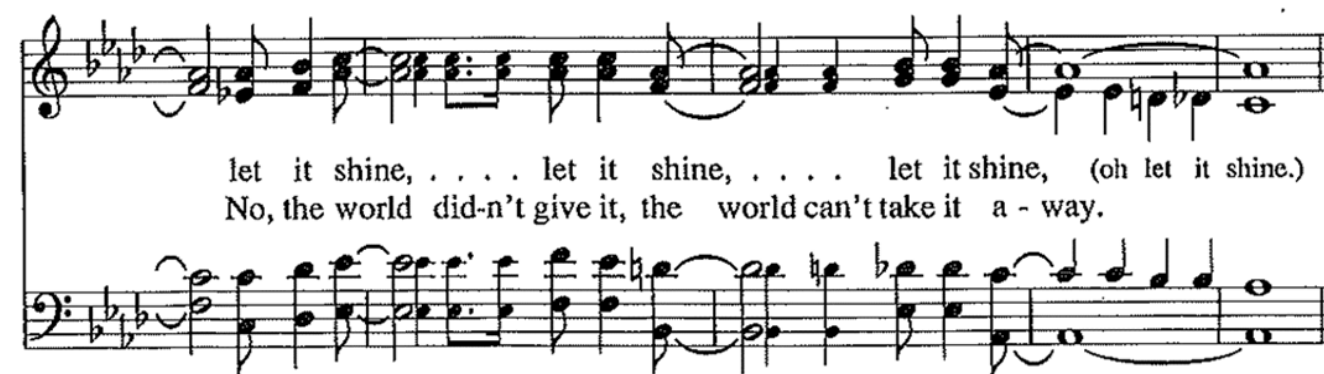


This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine.
 This joy I have, the world did-n't give to me.



This lit - tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine,
 This . . . joy I have, the world did-n't give to me.

Hal - le-lu - jah,
 Hal - le-lu, the



let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, (oh let it shine.)
 No, the world did-n't give it, the world can't take it a - way.

When Peace, Like a River


(It Is Well with My Soul)

Ps. 146; Col. 1:19-23; 2:13-14; 3 John 1:2

Horatio G. Spafford, 1873; alt.




1 When peace, like a riv - er, up - holds me each day, when
 2 Though e - vil should tempt me, though tri - als should come, let
 3 My sin— oh, the bliss of this glo - ri - ous thought—my
 4 O God, speed the day that is filled with your light, when




sor - rows like sea bil - lows roll, What - ev - er my lot, you have
 this blessed as - sur - ance con - trol, That Christ has re - gard - ed my
 sin— not in part, but the whole— Is nailed to the cross and I
 clouds are rolled back as a scroll; The trum - pet shall sound and the

Refrain



taught me to say, "It is well, it is well with my soul."
 help - less es - tate, and has paid life and blood for my soul: It is
 bear it no more. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!
 Lord shall ap - pear, "e - ven so"— it is well with my soul.



well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.
 It is well with my soul.

JUSTICE
PEACE

SUNDAY 9.14.2025



Also Celebrating
International Day
of Peace!

The Earth Mourns

"For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black; because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it."

Jeremiah 4:28

Hustle to End HUNGER 5K



PRESENTED BY



GENETICS INSTITUTE OF AMERICA



LAKE WORTH
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



OCTOBER 4, 2025

7:30AM

JOHN PRINCE PARK
LAKE WORTH BEACH



100% of
proceeds benefit
CROS Ministries



SIGN UP



FINISHER MEDALS
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AGE GROUP AWARDS
NEW 2025: Lil' Hustle Dash
MUSIC & FOOD
Virtual Option Available



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 Benghttt
Vanie Joseph

Sexton
Email Address: Pastor Sheila sheila@unionucc.net
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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.

Office Hours are: Tuesday thru Friday from 9:00AM – 1:00 PM.

THIS WEEK AT UNION UCC

Sunday, September 14, 2025 Just Peace Sunday!

10:00 AM Worship – Facebook Live Streaming

11:15 AM Fellowship - All are welcome!

11:45 AM PEACE “House Meeting”

Tuesday - Friday – The Sanctuary is Available for Prayer!

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



Sunday, September 21, 2025

10:00 AM Worship – Facebook Live Streaming

11:15 AM Fellowship - All are welcome!

**PEACE VILLAGE FUNDING
OPPORTUNITY**

October 7th



Sign-up for the Board of County Commissioners Meeting on October 7, 2025, when they will vote on whether to award funding towards the Peace Village Affordable Senior Housing Project.



NEW MEMBER'S CLASS

We are inviting our friends to be part of the Union family. All who are interested in becoming a member of the church, please see Pastor Sheila or a Deacon.

September 14, 2025

1 Timothy 1:12-17

Growing in God's Love

In all my years in ministry, I only once lived in a parsonage. The church-provided house was one of those Sears Roebuck mail-order homes that were popular from 1908 through the 1940s.

The house had pocket doors, a sunroom, and a cozy living room with a large stone fireplace. It also had a kitchen doorway that was marked with lines and dates, documenting the growth of a former pastor's child. Judging by the years etched into the wood, it seemed no one had the heart to ever sand the frame and give it a coat of fresh paint.

The markings always intrigued me, making me pause each time I walked into the kitchen. I would gently touch the grooves and marvel at the miracle of growing up, not just physically, but spiritually as well.

I thought about how the growth lines on a doorframe are ultimately so finite. There comes the day when we reach our God-intended height. Our spiritual growth lines, though, are infinite. There's no stopping point. God wants us to keep growing in knowledge of God's love. The Spirit wants us all to reach new and glorious heights.

The Apostle Paul, our ancient, prolific letter writer is once again penning a note of wisdom and grace. This time to his young disciple Timothy. Paul wants to impart his honed leadership skills to Timothy, but before he does, he reflects on his own spiritual growth. He shares with Timothy how no one is beyond the reach of God's forgiveness and, once received, that forgiveness leads to a spiritual growth spurt that Paul himself experienced. Once a persecutor of Jews, God's grace led Paul to become a towering proponent of Christ's love.

Paul's letter to Timothy is one we all need to read this day because no matter how old we are, we need to remember that we should never stop growing spiritually. There is a divine doorframe with markings on it for each one of us, recording just how much we have matured in the knowledge of a great and redeeming God.

Wondering just how much you have grown? Here's a spiritual exercise for you. Think back to who you were 5 years ago. Now 10 years. How about 20 years ago? What did you believe? What were the prejudices you clung to? What were the awakenings your soul experienced?

Now mind you, spiritual growth does not always mean a notch higher up on the heavenly doorframe year after year. There might be years of no growth. There might even be years of backsliding. And that's okay, because the wonderful truth is this: God always gives us another chance. There are limitless opportunities to keep growing in the Spirit.

God of wisdom, may we never stop growing in the Spirit. May we continue to master the lessons you have for us — lessons on how to love one another, how to trust your guidance, and how to forgive and show grace to others. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.