



Spirit of
WITNESS



**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
SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

May 17, 2026

*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"

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Words of Welcome & Announcements

INTROIT

"I Will Enter Gates/ This Is the Day"

**I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart, I will enter His courts
with praise! I will say, "This is the day that the Lord has made!"
I will rejoice for he has made me glad. He has made me glad.
He has made me glad. I will rejoice for he has made me glad.
He has made me glad. He has made me glad.
I will rejoice for he has made me glad. (Repeat)**

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: Here we gather, each from our individual lives. We carry into this place the joys
and the worries of our week, the weight of our personal experience, the anxieties
of all that the future may hold.

All: Here we gather, in prayer and preparation. Here we knit ourselves into a community. We hold one another in compassion and remember that the work you have called us to do, we do not do it alone.

One: Come, let us worship.

***INVOCATION**

Christ is with us!

Christ is in our midst!

O God, we gather together to find words for our prayers. The words of your prayers sprinkle this whole world with possibility. Our eyes are open. Our ears are alert. Our noses await that first scent of glory and our taste buds wonder what will be savored. Our hands are ready to hold and touch and feel the promise of the Spirit here among us as we gather. O God, fill our senses with your glory. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE** "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

PASTORAL PRAYER

Sharing Joys and Concerns

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 "I Need You to Survive"

I pray for you, you pray for me. I love you. I need you to survive.

I won't harm you with words from my mouth, I love you, I need you to survive.

It is God's will that every need be supplied.

You are important to me, I need you to survive.

You are important to me, I need you to survive. *(Repeat)*

OFFERTORY "Standing in the Need of Prayer"

(Refrain) It's me, It's me, It's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer;

It's me, It's me, It's me, O God, standing in the need of prayer.

Not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer;
not my brother, nor my sister, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer.

(Refrain)

Not my father, nor my mother, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer;
not my father, nor my mother, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer.

(Refrain)

Not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of
prayer

not the stranger, nor my neighbor, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of
prayer. *(Refrain)*

***DOXOLOGY** (*Deacons George and Nathan 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

Acts 17:22-31

When they were together for the last time they asked, “Master, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now? Is this the time?”

He told them, “You don’t get to know the time. Timing is the Father’s business. What you’ll get is the Holy Spirit. And when the Holy Spirit comes on you, you will be able to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, all over Judea and Samaria, even to the ends of the world.”

These were his last words. As they watched, he was taken up and disappeared in a cloud. They stood there, staring into the empty sky. Suddenly two men appeared—in white robes! They said, “You Galileans!—why do you just stand here looking up at an empty sky? This very Jesus who was taken up from among you to heaven will come as certainly—and mysteriously—as he left.”

Psalms 68: 1-10, 32-35

Let God rise up, let God's enemies be scattered;

let those who hate God flee before God.

As smoke is driven away, so drive them away;

as wax melts before the fire, let the wicked perish before God.

Sing to God, sing praises to God's name;

lift up a song to the one who rides upon the clouds;

be exultant before God

whose name is the sovereign.

Father-Mother of orphans and protector of widows

is God in God's holy habitation.

God gives the desolate a home to live in; God leads out the prisoners to prosperity.

but the rebellious live in a desolate land.

O God, when you went out before your people,

when you marched through the wilderness, the earth quaked,

the heavens poured down rain at the presence of God, the God of Sinai,

at the presence of God, the God of Israel.

Rain in abundance, O God, you showered abroad;

you restored your heritage when it languished;

Your flock found a dwelling in it;

in your goodness, O God you provided for the needy.

Sing to God, O nations of the earth;

sing praises to God,

O rider in the heavens, the ancient heavens;

listen, God sends out a voice, a might voice.

Ascribe power to God, whose majesty is over Israel;

and whose power is in the skies.

Awesome is God in God's sanctuary;

the God of Israel gives power and strength to God's people. Blessed be God!

John 17:1-12

Jesus said these things. Then, raising his eyes in prayer, he said: Father, it's time. Display the bright splendor of your Son so the Son in turn may show your bright splendor. You put him in charge of everything human so he might give real and eternal life to all in his charge. And this is the real and eternal life: that they know you, the one and only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you sent. I glorified you on earth by completing down to the last detail what you assigned me to do. And now, Father, glorify me with your very own splendor, the very splendor I had in your presence before there was a world.

I spelled out your character in detail to the men and women you gave me. They were yours in the first place; then you gave them to me, and they have now done what you said. They know now, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that everything you gave me is firsthand from you, for the message you gave me, I gave them; and they took it, and were convinced that I came from you. They believed that you sent me. I pray for them. I'm not praying for the God-rejecting world but for those you gave me, For they are yours by right. Everything mine is yours, and yours mine, and my life is on display in them. For I'm no longer going to be visible in the world; they'll continue in the world while I return to you. Holy Father, guard them as they pursue this life that you conferred as a gift through me, so they can be one heart and mind as we are one heart and mind. As long as I was with them, I guarded them in the pursuit of the life you gave through me; I even posted a night watch and not one of them got away, except for the rebel bent on destruction.

Thanks be to God!

SONG OF PREPARATION

"My Tribute"

Arr. Aaron Adderley

SERMON

"Spirit of Witness"

Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey

***CLOSING HYMN**

"Blessed Assurance"

***COMMISSIONING AND BLESSING**

POSTLUDE

"Glory, Glory, Hallelujah"

Arr. Aaron Adderley

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

Donna Minott, Stephen Spencer, Rebekah Gay

Deacons Assisting

Louise Dempster

Union's Joys & Prayer Concerns

Joys: All Birthdays in May! Our Church Family! Live Streaming!

Concerns:

Dorothy Bates; Linda Padmore; Stephen Spencer: Joan Gerson; Paula & Kirk's daughter-in-law, Melissa; Adderley's mom, Maxine; Lin's mom; Sharon and Donna's family and friends; Phyllis Adderley; Martha Yanick family & friends; Stephen Spencer family and friends; Jan Mark; Robert Herald family & friends; Timothy Blood; Tom Richards's sister, Cindy Richards-Wallace & his friend, Jackie Sloan; 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; Donna's brother, Clevert; George Gerson's Brother, Michael; Melanie's Friend, Donna; Borjana's son, Petar; 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'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; Mass deportations of Immigrants; War In Iran; Cost of Living Increases



Flowers today are dedicated
in loving memory of my Mom
on her heavenly birthday.
~Sabita Shah



Sunday School Highlight

Join us in Sunday School as we read and learn about a prayer. Jesus prayed for his first friends and disciples. What and who would you like to prayer for? What does prayer mean to you? Let's explore together!

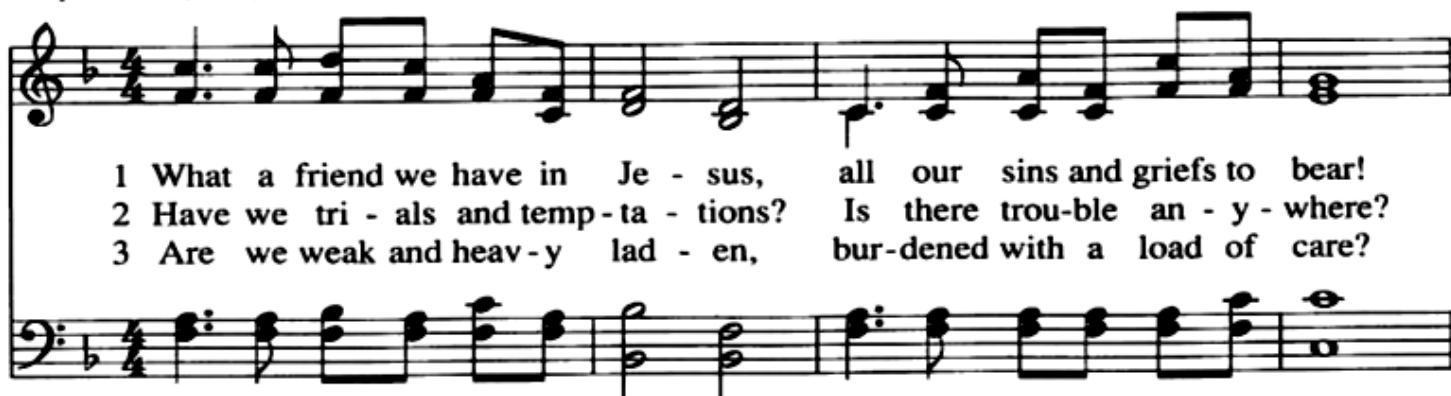


What a Friend We Have in Jesus

506

Joseph Scriven, 1855; alt.

Phil. 4:6-7



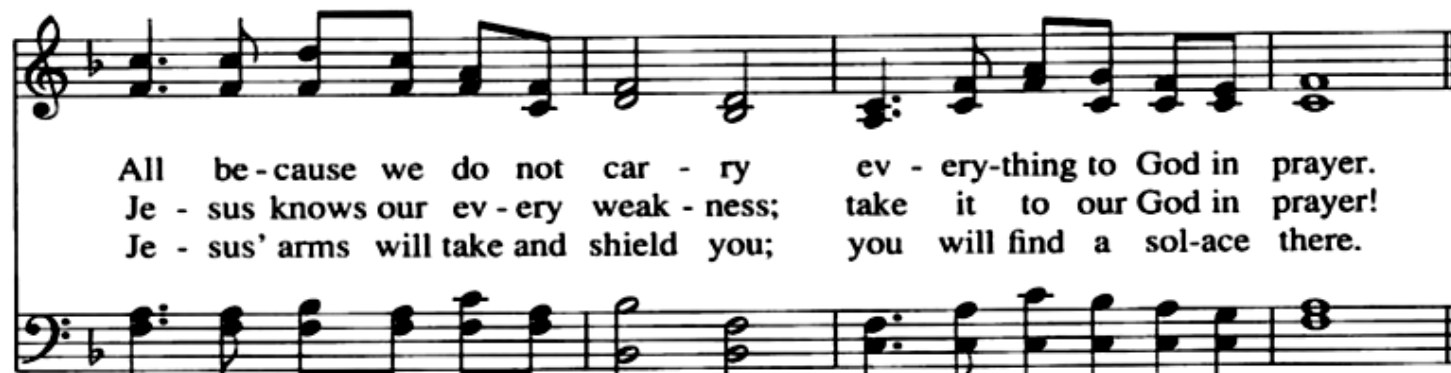
1 What a friend we have in Je - sus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
2 Have we tri - als and temp - ta - tions? Is there trou - ble an - y - where?
3 Are we weak and heav - y lad - en, bur - dened with a load of care?



What a priv - i - lege to car - ry ev - ery - thing to God in prayer!
We should nev - er be dis - cour - aged; take it to our God in prayer!
Pre - cious Sav - ior, still our ref - uge, take it to our God in prayer!



Oh, what peace we of - ten for - feit, oh, what need - less pain we bear,
Can we find a friend so faith - ful, who will all our sor - rows share?
Do your friends de - spise, for - sake you? Take it to our God in prayer!



All be - cause we do not car - ry ev - ery - thing to God in prayer.
Je - sus knows our ev - ery weak - ness; take it to our God in prayer!
Je - sus' arms will take and shield you; you will find a sol - ace there.

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.
 above ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
 above, 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;
 This is my sto - ry, this is my song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

UNION'S TRIP TO ORLANDO!

On May 31 – June 1, the Christian Education/Youth and Justice and Peace Teams are planning an intergenerational trip to Orlando! The purpose of the trip is to gather as a church family to deepen relationships with fun activities while exploring historical sites that remind us about the importance of embracing peace and justice for all!

Thanks to all who signed up for the trip to Orlando. We plan to depart Union on Sunday, May 31st at 12:30 pm, and return in the evening on Monday, June 1st. Adults to pay admission into the theme park. Students' theme park admission is covered by scholarships. Please review the checklist below.

Checklist:

- Backpack – personal items
- Snacks
- Water bottle
- First-aid kit
- Money for incidentals



ORLANDO



**Strengthen
the Church**

On Sunday, May 24, 2026, we
will have a special offering for
"Strengthen The Church."

SENT FORTH IN
LOVE

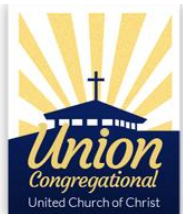
A Special Mission Offering of
the United Church of Christ
supporting new church,
leadership, and youth
cultivation through our
Conferences and
National Ministries.



STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH

UCC.ORG/STC

UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST



**UNION CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SPRING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING BOOKLET
WILL BE AVAILABLE ON SUNDAY, MAY 31ST.**



KINDNESS IS LOVE IN ACTION!



Union joins with the wider church and the United States of Kindness project in hopes to have a big impact on the way citizens treat each other by offering 250 Acts of Kindness, and we are already off to a great start!!

We will keep a sheet on the soundboard (or email zaida@Unionucc.net) for us to share how our Kindness is Love in Action! Join in on the good-fun of being Kind!!!

<https://www.ucc.org/ucc-and-values-in-action-partnership-working-to-promote-kindness-across-the-country/>



Hymn Sing Sunday



SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, June 28, 2026

Please fill out the form on the soundboard with your favorite hymn!

ALL ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE



Student **APPRECIATION DAY**

SUNDAY, MAY 31, 2026

Sunday School Class Appreciation Sunday!

Student Appreciation Party During Fellowship!

Parents: Remember to fill out the student form to finalize summer planning, highlights of your student's achievements and grade level. If you have a graduate,

share their names by calling the office at

561-686-0330 or email Zaida: zaida@unionucc.net.

Deadline: Noon on Thursday, May 26, 2026.

JUNE/JULY NEWSLETTER ARTICLES ANNOUNCEMENTS REMINDER



Please submit any articles for the June/July Newsletter by **Tuesday, June 2nd**. Send via email to Zaida at zaida@unionucc.net. Thank you!

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

Ministers of the Church

All of Us

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Sheila Harvey

Music Director

Aaron Adderley

Vocalists

Michelle Benght

Tom Richards

Sexton

Vanie Joseph

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.

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

THIS WEEK AT UNION UCC

Sunday, May 17, 2026

10:00 AM - Worship – Facebook Live Streaming

11:15 AM - Fellowship - All are welcome!

11:45 AM – Christian Education/Youth Meeting

Tuesday - Friday – The Prayer Room is Open!

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

Sunday, May 24, 2026 - Strengthen the Church

10:00 AM - Worship – Facebook Live Streaming

11:15 AM - Fellowship - All are welcome!



**THANK YOU TO ALL
WHO HELPED MAKE
“TEA TIME” WITH UNION’S
MOTHERS A GREAT
SUCCESS!!**



SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 17, 2026

John 17:1-11

Spirit of Witness

Eastertide is coming to an end. But before we usher in the power of the Holy Spirit at the celebration of Pentecost next week, I pause to pray. For you. Yes, you.

I have even stepped away from writing this to light a candle, thanking God for the hearts that would be touched by words that often seem a feeble attempt in capturing how amazing, awesome, and perplexingly mysterious our God is.

I thanked God for you, dear readers. I thanked God for each soul awakening to the Easter promise of new life. I thanked God that while we never have or never will see one another in person, we can still call each other siblings in Christ, connected by our thirst for not only knowing God, but for understanding God if only a little bit better.

Eastertide's 50 days are wrapping up and that means Jesus is about to leave his friends for good this time to ascend into Heaven. But before he goes, he talks to them, and he prays.

John 17 is known by scholars as the "high priestly prayer," where Jesus first prays for himself, thanking God for all that God has done through him, and then prays for others. I love that Jesus begins with himself in mind. It is a reminder that it is not selfish to pray for ourselves.

As a pastor, I have heard many people brush aside their worries, uttering something like "enough about me, my problems a nothing compared to others." That is so not true. Your worries, your fears and your problems matter to God. As the old hymn attests, many times "it's me, it's me, O Lord, standing in the need of prayer."

After praying for himself, Jesus then prays for his friends, thanking God for them and asking for continued strength and protection for their days ahead.

I wonder how many times after Jesus finally left his earthly life that his friends remembered how, through the power of prayer, Jesus continues to be right there by their sides? How many times do we remember that when feeling lonely and needing our Friend and Savior in our life, that all we have to do is pray?

And what is prayer? It is simply talking to the one you love. Prayer is also sitting silently with the one you love the most as God doesn't need our words. All God wants is our hearts.

And so, I find myself on this Sunday as Eastertide comes to an end, sitting here saying a prayer of thanks for each one of you reading these words right now. And I pray you feel those prayers.

Heavenly God, we know that You are not far off, but very close to us. You are always surrounding us with love and protection. We thank Jesus for his example of prayer, too. May this day we find ourselves praying more frequently and praying more boldly, remembering that prayer does change all things. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.