

UNION TIDINGS

*A monthly publication of Union Congregational United Church of Christ
5088 Summit Boulevard, West Palm Beach, FL 33415*

Volume 133, Issue 7

August 2026

Together With Hope!

On July 15, 2026, I was elected to serve as the Moderator (Chair) of the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ. During this time of transition and hope, I thought it fitting to share the letter below with the Conference and with Union. At Union, we have also had a season of transition in our leadership, and it has been heartening to experience the summer months bloom with wonderful fellowship, new leadership, and spirit-filled renewal. Let's continue shining the love and light of Christ for all to see. And together with hope, the Conference will do the same!

LETTER TO THE FLORIDA CONFERENCE FROM PASTOR SHEILA IN HER NEW ROLE AS MODERATOR OF THE FLORIDA CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A TIME OF TRANSITION AND HOPE: *As your newly elected Moderator, I look forward to serving our Conference in this season of leadership transition.*

In recent months, several members of our leadership team have resigned, creating both challenges and opportunities for reflection, growth, and renewal. While this has been a season of unexpected change for our Conference, our Board remains united in its commitment to providing stable leadership, fostering healthy relationships, and discerning God's direction for our future.

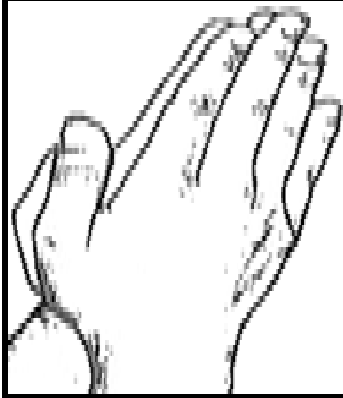
To help guide us during this transition, we are in the process of calling a Bridge Conference Minister who will provide interim leadership and support as we prepare to welcome our next Conference Minister. We believe this intentional approach will strengthen our Conference and position us well for the future. We recognize that many conferences experience seasons of change, and we are committed to governing this Conference with honesty, transparency, prayer, and hope.

We invite Members of the Conference to walk alongside us in a spirit of collaboration, helping to lead with wisdom, humility, and compassion. Together, we look forward with confidence to the next chapter of our shared ministry and to the opportunities God has before us.

We are the Church together. Let's continue forward with hope holding Christ's love in our hearts.

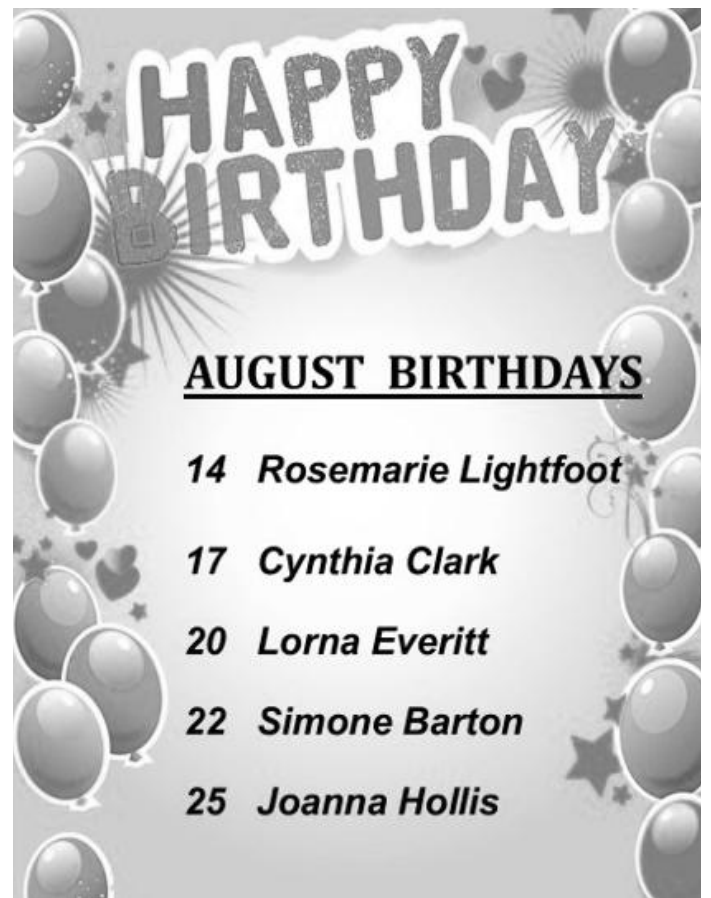
*In Christ's Love,
Pastor Sheila*





Keep
in Your
Prayers

Sam Clark; Zaida's family & friends; Susan Young's family and friends, Jan Mark; Debbie Englert; 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; 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



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

14 Rosemarie Lightfoot

17 Cynthia Clark

20 Lorna Everitt

22 Simone Barton

25 Joanna Hollis

**How can I
give to
Union UCC?**

MOBILE:
Scan this
Code



ONLINE:
UNIONUCC.NET (GIVE)

ENVELOPE:
CASH AND CHECKS MADE
PAYABLE TO UNION UCC

FLOWERS FOR THE SANCTUARY



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.

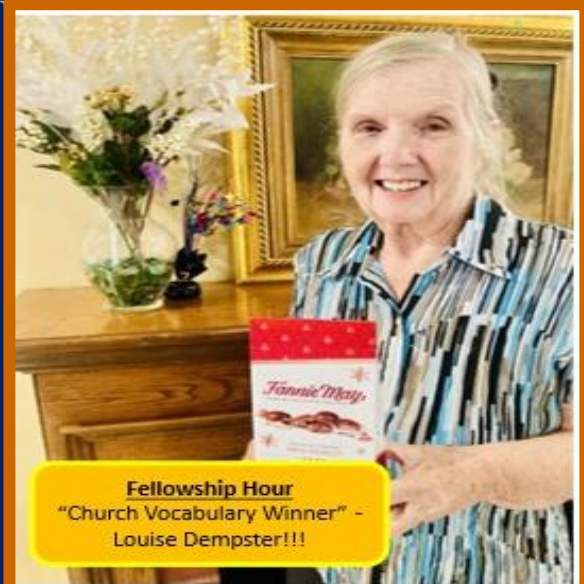
UNION CELEBRATES AMERICA'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY!



Juneteenth Celebration at Union!



Father's Day Celebration!



Fellowship Hour
"Church Vocabulary Winner" -
Louise Dempster!!!

Mission & Outreach August 2026

For the Lord has commanded us, saying "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the end, of the earth."

Acts 13:47

Hello from Canada!!!!

Although summer is usually a slower time for our committee, we still have information to share with you.

Oct. 04/26 will be our next opportunity to help our UCC to reach out to Neighbors **in Need**. This is a special offering of the UCC that supports justice and compassion. 1/3 of the collection goes to the (CAIM) Council for American Indian Ministries and 2/3 supports National Justice and advocacy programs as well as local Church grants. You will find the envelopes in the back of the chairs in the sanctuary.

For Our **CROS Ministries** effort we are looking for a volunteer to undertake a Gleaning experience. Currently we do one during the winter months but there are opportunities in the summer. Please contact me at mgaetano2@yahoo.com.

We are always looking for donations for children and adult books in English and/or Spanish for our **Free Little Library**. You may drop your donations in a bag, by the bookcases in the Fellowship Hall or by the bookcase in the yellow room across from the Food Pantry. We always remember how important it is to nourish the mind as well as the body.

Our **Food Pantry** currently distributes about 100 bags of food staples a month. All of that takes time and money to work. Your contribution to the Food Pantry is essential for us to keep moving forward in our effort to help our neighbors. Aside from monetary contributions we also function entirely on volunteers to buy the food, pack the food and distribute it. Our volunteers are amazing and hard working. They give up their time to answer God's call to be there for the needy. I cannot express enough gratitude for their efforts. We are always looking for dedicated people to further the cause.

Thank you for taking the time to read about our efforts. May God bless you and keep you

Marion Gaetano, Chair of Missions & Outreach



KINDNESS IS LOVE IN ACTION CONTINUES!



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 enjoying putting our kindness into Action!

We have 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/>



ELECTION EXPO 2026

Leadership | PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE | PLEASED BY WOMEN VOTERS

NONPARTISAN • NETWORKING • ICE CREAM • COFFEE • FAMILY FUN

FREE
ALL WELCOME

SEPTEMBER 28 | 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM
PALM BEACH STATE COLLEGE GYMNASIUM
4200 S. CONGRESS AVE., LAKE WORTH

VOTE

MEET CANDIDATES ONE-ON-ONE

- ✓ Free Voters' Guide
- ✓ Voting Machine Demo
- ✓ Election Dates & Deadlines
- ✓ Amendments & Referendum

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

We are excited to share that Union's Food Pantry is transitioning to a team-based approach. This new model will allow volunteers to share responsibilities, work together more effectively, and ensure the pantry continues to serve our community with care and compassion. By working as a team, we can build on each person's strengths, provide greater support for one another, and create a sustainable ministry for the future. We are grateful for everyone who has faithfully served the Food Pantry over the years and look forward to this new chapter of collaboration. Together, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. A sign-up sheet will be on the soundboard for baggers and shoppers.



IT'S MAKE-A-WILL MONTH!

Scan the QR code or visit FreeWill.com/ucc to make your will this August.

DID YOU KNOW?

Renting Often No Longer Occurs In A "Free Market"

Union joins with **PEACE** works for justice by holding government officials accountable. But why is government even involved? You may be surprised to know that those renting apartments often operate outside what you might think of as the "free market".

Rising rents in the U.S. are a complex problem, causing a severe lack of affordable housing. One factor contributing to higher rents is the concentration in ownership of those buildings. According to a report by the Private Equity Stakeholder Project, corporate private equity firms - not the Mom and Pop landlords who also struggle to make ends meet - now own at least 11,800 apartment buildings with **almost 3 million units**, or approximately **13%** of all apartment units in the U.S. Often they buy buildings funded by federal low-income housing tax credits and once the federal rent restrictions expire they increase rents dramatically. Blackstone spent **\$5 billion** buying low income housing in 2021 alone. Some corporate private equity firms use software called **RealPage**. In January 2025 the Dept of Justice and 10 states sued Blackstone, Cortland and Greystar for creating a 'cartel' by using that landlord information to create **price-setting algorithms**. In 2024 the Council of Economic Advisors found that rent inflation by users of RealPage cost renters more than **\$3.6 billion**. RealPage was used to price about half of the 300,000 apartments in South Florida. The United Church of Christ Washington DC office has long addressed the deep impact of the lack of affordable housing. As our justice and peace efforts are ongoing, so are our prayers.

Justice and Peace Ministry

Over the summer, many members of our congregation have been reading Zora Neale Hurston's book, "Their Eyes Were Watching God." We'll be discussing it after Worship Service on Sunday, August 9. Join us for an engaging book discussion and learn about our summer intergenerational church trip to Hurston's hometown of Eatonville, Florida, and the Pulse Nightclub Memorial site in Orlando.

During the Fall, our Justice and Peace Team will focus on upcoming election issues and concerns. We'll help the congregation stay informed about voter issues and candidates. Additionally, during Fellowship Hour, team members will assist any congregational member interested in making sure their voter registration information is up to date. More details will be shared soon.

Union's PEACE Partners Updates

As an organization, PEACE has been actively working on several important issues; affordable housing, immigration, community policing, and mental health. These are significant issues affecting many of our neighbors in Palm Beach County. PEACE members continue to collaborate with local officials and community leaders to address these issues and advocate for positive change.

Given the magnitude of these issues, at PEACE's strategic board meeting on July 25, 2026, board members decided not to add any new issues at this time. What does this mean for Union Congregational and our PEACE team members?

There is still much work to be done in our pursuit of justice and equality for all. We all can help make a difference by attending one of our listening sessions in the fall as we hope to gather new stories from you that PEACE members can use during meetings with county officials and leaders.

We need PEACE Team members more than ever to actively work and advocate for change. This is an opportunity for Union to contribute to positive change for our neighbors.

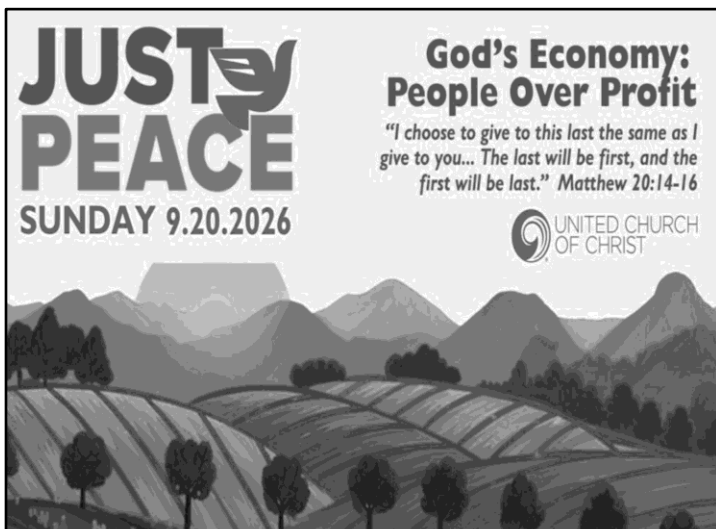
Micah 6:8 outlines clear requirements for God's people: to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

When you're invited to a listening session, consider saying yes! And when you're asked to be a PEACE Team member, consider saying yes!

By participating, you can help bring about a world where everyone is treated with dignity, justice, and equality, as beloved children of God.

WE ARE PEACE. WE ARE NEIGHBORS!

Paula Dorhout
Justice & Peace Chair



YOUTH & KIDS CORNER

SUMMERTIME FUN AT UNION!



TO OUR STUDENTS AT UNION:



Book Announcement

Congratulations to Brandon on the publication of his first book, War for Earth!!!



VBS was a HUGE success! Many Thanks to our Christian Ed & Youth Ministry Team, Pastor Sheila, parents and AMAZING students. What a great way to kick off the Summer Break!

August 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Food Pantry 9am-11:30 am
2 Worship 10 AM FB Live Streaming Communion Sunday	3	4 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	5 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	6 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	7 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	8
9 Worship 10 AM FB Live Streaming Back to School Sundae	10	11 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	12 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	13 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	14 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	15
16 Worship 10 AM FB Live Streaming	17	18 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	19 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	20 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	21 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	22
23 Worship 10 AM FB Live Streaming	24	25 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	26 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	27 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	28 9am-1pm Office Hours Prayer room open	29
30 Worship 10 AM FB Live Streaming	31					



TODAY:

AUGUST 9, 2026

BACK TO SCHOOL

"SUNDAE"



Inspirational Drawstring Bags Give Away!

AFTER WORSHIP
ALL ARE WELCOME!



Union Congregational United Church of Christ
5088 Summit Boulevard
West Palm Beach, Florida 33415
(561) 686-0330
www.unionucc.net
email: office@unionucc.net

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Hot Summer News Especially for You:

