



Community UCC

We're worth our words

Welcoming Progressive Community

Vibrant Messengers of Hope



Champaign, Illinois

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year A

May 3, 2026

Thoughts before worship: *"For Those Who Have Far to Travel,"* by Jan Richardson

If you could see
the journey whole,
you might never
undertake it,
might never dare
the first step
that propels you
from the place
you have known
toward the place
you know not.

Call it
one of the mercies
of the road:
that we see it
only by stages
as it opens
before us,
as it comes into
our keeping,
step by
single step.

There is nothing
for it
but to go,
and by our going
take the vows
the pilgrim takes:
to be faithful to
the next step;
to rely on more
than the map;
to heed the signposts
of intuition and dream;
to follow the star
that only you
will recognize;

to keep an open eye
for the wonders that
attend the path;
to press on
beyond distractions,
beyond fatigue,
beyond what would
tempt you
from the way.
There are vows
that only you
will know:
the secret promises
for your particular path
and the new ones
you will need to make
when the road
is revealed
by turns
you could not
have foreseen.

Keep them, break them,
make them again;
each promise becomes
part of the path,
each choice creates
the road
that will take you
to the place
where at last
you will kneel
to offer the gift
most needed—
the gift that only you
can give—
before turning to go
home by
another way.

Prelude

Andrey Ivanov

We welcome you to our service this morning. Celebrating the diversity of creation, Community United Church welcomes persons of any age, ability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation or life condition. May the Divine Presence become real to you through this time of worship. We hope you come back!

Note: *Our worship services are live streamed. If you prefer not to have the back of your head seen on the live stream worship please do not sit in the first seven pews on the left side (organ/piano) of the sanctuary.*

Note 2: *The congregation responds to the liturgy parts in **BOLD***

*Everyone is invited to stand in body or in spirit.

***Call to Worship**

In You, Holy One, we seek sanctuary. In you, Sovereign God, we seek refuge.

Holy One, for your name's sake lead us and guide us.

You are indeed our rock and our fortress. Our times are in your hands. Strengthen us in your righteousness.

Holy One, for your name's sake lead us and guide us

Shine upon us this day as we worship you. Saturate us in your steadfast love.

Holy One, for your name's sake lead us and guide us.

***Opening Hymn**

Rejoice, You Pure in Heart

NCH 55, v 1-4

*Re-joice, you pure in heart; lift prais-es to the sky;
Your fes-tal ban-ner wave with joy, the cross of Christ raise high!*

Refrain:

Ho-san-na! Ho-san-na! Re-joice, give thanks and sing.

*Bright youth and sea-soned age, strong souls and spir-its meek,
Raise high your free, ex-ult-ing song, God's won-drous prais-es speak.*

Refrain:

*With voice as full and strong as o-cean's surg-ing praise,
Send forth the hymns the saints have loved, the psalms of an-cient days.*

Refrain:

*Yes, on through life's long path, still chant-ing as you go,
From youth to age, by night and day, in glad-ness and in woe:*

Refrain:

Welcome, a Word About Worship, and an Opportunity to Check-In

Introit

From This Bright Hour

CUCC Choir

*From this bright hour and days to come, as we have gathered into one,
Open the gates and the light will shine, all around, let there be light!
All are welcome, all invited to open hearts and open minds!
In our living, in our learning may we always be searching for truth and light!*

Milestone Sunday Celebration

Blessing of the Graduates

In every age and stage of life, God calls us.

Whether young or old or middle age, no matter one's gender, God calls us.

In spite of his youth, God called and commissioned Jeremiah, saying, "Do not say to me, I am only a child....for before you were born, I consecrated you."

Young David slain the Philistine warrior Goliath and saved his people from certain destruction.

God called upon the girl Mary and she consented to carry the Light of the World into the world.

Jesus was a mere 30 years old when he began a ministry that would change the course of the world for all time.

Graduates among us, you have been gifted by God. You have much to give, we have much to learn from you.

We have two of our teenagers graduating from high school this year. We invite them to come forward to be recognized and honored.

**JJ Lee – Urbana High School
Chloe Robberts-Mosser — University High School**

We also have a number of students completing their undergraduate and graduate degrees this year. We ask them to

please come forward to be recognized and honored.

Rhea Chawla — Bachelor’s Degree — University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Carly Dahm — Bachelor’s Degree— University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Travis Huynh — Bachelor’s Degree — University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Eva Lam — Master Degree — University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Roger Leyba — Master Degree — University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Armaan Suga — Bachelor’s Degree— University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
Faizi Tofighn — Bachelor’s Degree — University of Illinois Urbana Champaign

Blessing

Let us pray:

Holy Wisdom, we give you thanks for those who stand before us, all they have learned and all they have accomplished. We ask your continued inspiration and guidance as they travel onto new adventures. May they always be in search of that place to which you call, where their own “deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” Stretch and challenge them, comfort and console them so that they might find both purpose and fulfillment for the whole of their lives. Amen.

Blessing of our Elders

In every age and stage of life, God calls us.

Whether young or old, no matter one’s gender, God calls us.

In spite of her age, God called Sarah, who at 90 years of age or more, bore Isaac. She became the mother of multitudes.

Six hundred year old Noah built the ark and saved his family and the animals from certain destruction.

God called upon barren Elizabeth to bring the Voice in the Wilderness into the World.

Simeon and Anna, the senior citizens of Mary and Joseph’s church, upon seeing the new born baby boy, praised God, for they could see he was bound for glory.

Elders among us, you have been gifted by God. You have given much and have still much to give; we have much to learn from you.

Our church community is blessed to have in our midst many elders who are 85 years of age or older, who we called forward to recognize in the past. This year, we have one more who has reached that milestone, and we now invite them to be recognized and honored:

Rosa Matilde Leon

Fare Thee Well

Grannie Annie and Grandpa Matt Hart

Blessing

Let us pray,

Ancient of Days, we give you thanks for all our elders, and especially today Rosa Matilde, Ann and Matthew, for all they has accomplished and are accomplishing still. We ask your continued inspiration and guidance as they continues to travel on to new adventures. May they continually grow in the wisdom that comes with age. Stretch and challenge them, comfort and console them, so they might find both purpose and fulfillment for the whole of their life. Amen.

***Response of Praise**

Halleluja

NCH 236

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja.

Hal-le, hal-le, hal-le-lu-ja.

Hal-le-lu-ja, hal-le-lu-ja.

*Passing the Peace

Call to Prayer community-ucc.org/pray



Prelude to Scripture

Sacred Reading from the Acts of the Gospels

John 14:1-14

Postlude to Scripture

Together, let us say:

May the Spirit bless us with wisdom and wonder as we ponder the meaning of these words for our lives.

Call to Offering community-ucc.org/



Offertory *Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled*

CUCC Choir

Message *Many Rooms: Extravagant Hospitality is a Christian Practice*

Silent Meditation

*Hymn *I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry*

NCH 351

Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Opening Words

Holy one, as we gather around the font this day, we remember how water runs through your Story:

Before the world had shape and form, your Spirit moved over the waters. Out of the waters of the deep, you formed the firmament and brought forth the earth to sustain all life. In the time of Noah, you washed the earth with the waters of the flood, and your ark of salvation bore a new beginning.

In the time of Moses, your people Israel passed through the Red Sea waters from slavery to freedom and crossed the flowing Jordan to enter the promised land.

In the fullness of time, you sent Jesus Christ, who was nurtured in the water of Mary's womb.

Jesus was baptized by John in the water of the Jordan, became living water to a woman at the Samaritan well, washed the feet of the disciples, and sent them forth to baptize all the nations by water and the Holy Spirit.

Water is necessary for our survival. Your holy waters sustain our lives as well.

Invitation

Baptismal Prayer

Parent's Promises

Parent's and Sponsors' Promises

Congregational Assent

And now I turn to the congregation. The church is the community of Christ, the gathering of people with whom we walk in faith and commitment. Together, we make this promise:

On behalf of all disciples past and present, we look forward new journeys with you. We wish that we can promise you a world without fear, a world without pain, a world without suffering. We cannot make that promise but we do promise that God will love you no matter what life brings and that we as a community will

Acknowledgements

Liturgy modified from <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way>, prayers written by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

Introit, "*From This Bright Hour*," Mark A. Miller

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Prayer Response, "*Holy Spirit Fall on Me*," Mary Kay Bell

Offertory, "*Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled*," Oley Speaks

Benediction Response, "*Peace to You*," Words by Shirley Erena Murray, Music by Lloyd Larson

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Serving Today

Ministers: The Community of Community UCC
Preacher and Presider: Rev. Leah Robberts-Mosser
Presider: Pastor Izzy Collazo
Usher: Peg Wade
Accompanist: Andrey Ivanov **Musician:** CUCC Choir
Audio/Video: John Osborne, Susan Pawlicki, Sean Walker

Community United Church of Christ Staff

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Accompanist: Andrey Ivanov**Office Manager:**

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Your Ministry Team Leaders

Moderator: Beth Hogan*

Past Moderator: Susan Pawlicki*

Incoming Moderator: Bill Gropp*

Clerk: Jeff Radek*

Pastoral Relations Committee: Cara Finnegan

Personnel Committee: Stephen Kolderup

Community Building: Peg Wade*

- **Care Team:** (Coordinator Open)

- **Prayer Shawls:** Elena Kasper

- **Meal Train:** Jennifer Robbennolt

- **Driver's Ministry:** Mary Bunyard

- **Visitor & Healing Music Ministry:** Marilou Hinrichs

- **Card Ministry:** Peg Wade

- **Health and Wellness Team:** Chase Skye, Kelly Tull

- **Hospitality Team:** Rocio (Ro) Arroyave Jamison and Dennis Jamison

Children & Family: Alison Anders*, Jennifer Johnson

Finance: Roger Wade* (treasurer), David Willcox (financial secretary)

Identity: Keri Evans* (open)

Mission: Jeanne Ward* and Patty Gropp

Sound & Ethical Practices (SEP): Sue Fristoe*, Shane Brownfield

- **Buildings & Grounds:** Tom Ward, Marla Elmore

- **Contracts & Insurance:** Andrew McClure

UCC Campus Ministry Liaison: Ilsa Kantola*

Worship: Mara Smith*, Sebastian Major

- **Sound Coordinator:** Roger Wade

*denotes Church Life Board Member

United Church Foundation (UCC Campus Ministry)

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