

Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday Celebration • August 24, 2025 • 10:00 AM



"Jesus and the Bent Over Woman" by Sister Barbara Schwarz



SAINT JAMES
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

CREATION JUSTICE • JUST PEACE • OPEN AND AFFIRMING

Founded in 1853

Rev. Paul Werner, Pastor
Ciaran Krueger, Music Director
Christy Schrecengost, Church Administrator
Jonathan Rizzo, Accompanist

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Liturgist: Marie Nolan



“Sometimes I arrive just when God’s ready to have someone click the shutter.”
Ansel Adams (*20th century*)

“The sun will rise and set regardless. What we choose to do with the light while it’s here is up to us. Journey wisely.”
Alexandra Elle (*21st century*)

“The great Swiss theologian Karl Barth wrote, ‘A being is free only when it can determine and limit its activity.’ By that definition, I have a hard time counting many free beings among my acquaintances. I know people who can do five things at once who are incapable of doing nothing.... Since I have been one of these people, I know that saying no is a more difficult spiritual practice than tithing, praying on a cold stone floor, or visiting a prisoner on death row.”
Barbara Brown Taylor (*21st century*)

“Anybody can observe the Sabbath, but making it holy surely takes the rest of the week.”
Alice Walker (*21st century*)

“Can you think of a time when the ‘healing touch of Jesus’ actually enabled you to see something you had not seen before? Something wondrous? Some injustice? What was that like? And what happened next?”
Janet H. Hunt (*21st century*)

“The Sabbath is a weekly cathedral raised up in my dining room, in my family, in my heart.”
Anita Diamant (*21st century*)

Congregation: Bold print
*Please rise in body or in spirit.

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the land upon which St. James UCC stands was originally the ancestral and unceded territory of the Haudenosaunee and Erie people. We celebrate and honor the contributions that Native Americans have made in the past and continue to make today in the Western New York area and the Americas. We embrace the Haudenosaunee philosophy that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future. Additionally, we commit to supporting initiatives that empower the local, national, and international Indigenous communities and to listening, learning, and taking actions to address injustices past and present that have impacted these communities and all God's creation.

WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to St. James, an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ, where we strive to be more fully the body of Christ. We are committed to welcoming and celebrating all people and the uniqueness we each bring. As people of faith, we boldly proclaim: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.

CONTEMPORARY READING / CONTINUING TESTAMENT

Rev. Paul Werner

INTROIT

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Please rise in body or in spirit to greet your neighbor with Christ's peace.

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

Please return to your seat as we begin to sing the opening hymn.

***OPENING HYMN**

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You"

NCH 4

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Marie Nolan

One: We may be thirsty and parched, like an unwatered garden, so we come into God's presence.
Many: The Divine One is a spring of water!
One: We may be weary from worry and work, so we come into God's presence.
Many: The Holy One offers us Sabbath rest!
One: We may be lost or confused, so we come into God's presence.
Many: The Wise One offers us welcome and guidance!
One: We may be bent double with struggle or pain, so we come into God's presence.
Many: The Healing One empowers us to stand strong!

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Marie

O God of all goodness, you welcome us, forgive us, and heal us. You seek us out from places where we have hidden from you. You crown us with steadfast love and mercy. Reveal yourself to us in this moment. Let us know your presence so that we may bless you: Bless you, O God! Bless your holy name! Amen.

***RESPONSE**

"There Is a Balm in Gilead" (Verse 1)

NCH 553

***There is a balm in Gilead, to make the wounded whole,
there is a balm in Gilead, to heal the sin-sick soul.
Sometimes I feel discouraged, and think my work's in vain,
But then the Holy Spirit revives my soul again.
There is a balm in Gilead, to make the wounded whole,
there is a balm in Gilead, to heal the sin-sick soul.***

CHILDREN'S TIME

SCRIPTURE

Luke 13:10-17 (The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)

Marie

The writer or writers of the Gospel of Luke placed a woman at the center of the story. The head of a synagogue challenged Jesus indignantly. Was he more concerned about protecting his turf and buffering against anticipated criticism from more orthodox fellow Jews? Jesus condemned his hypocrisy while the audience rejoiced at what they saw Jesus doing.

One Sabbath, Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues. There was a woman there who for eighteen years had a sickness caused by a spirit. She was bent double, quite incapable of standing up straight.

(continued on the next page) →

When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, “Woman, you are free of your infirmity.” He laid his hands on her, and immediately she stood up straight and began thanking God.

The head of the synagogue, indignant that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the congregation, “There are six days for working. Come on those days to be healed, not on the Sabbath.”

Jesus said in reply, “You hypocrites! Which of you doesn’t let your ox or your donkey out of the stall on the Sabbath to water it? This daughter of Sarah and Abraham has been in the bondage of Satan for eighteen years. Shouldn’t she have been released from her shackles on the Sabbath?” At these words, Jesus’ opponents were humiliated; meanwhile, everyone else rejoiced at the marvels Jesus was accomplishing.

CHORAL ANTHEM

MESSAGE

“Set Free from What?”

Rev. Paul

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION

PASTORAL PRAYER

LORD’S PRAYER / PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Our ____*, 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom**, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

**Use whatever language is closest to your own heart (Our Father, Our Creator, Our Father and Mother, etc.)*

***Or “kin-dom.”*

RESPONDING WITH OUR GENEROSITY

INVITATION

OFFERTORY / GIVING OF OUR GIFTS AND OFFERINGS

- *Please place your gift in the offering plate. Many of our members and friends give online. To do so, you are invited to use the information located on the back cover of this bulletin.*
- *Our gifts help sustain this community of faith by maintaining our facilities, supporting our staff, and providing the materials that make our ministry available to all.*

***DOXOLOGY**

NCH 780

(Sing the version of the Doxology that is closest to your own heart.)

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host: Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***CLOSING HYMN**

“Healer of Our Every Ill”

GTG 795

***BENEDICTION**

***SINGING FOR A JUST PEACE**

***Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth, with justice and dignity.***

***With God as Creator, family all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.***

***Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.
With every step I take, let this be my joyous vow:***

***To love with kindness and work for justice, that all may be set free.
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me!***

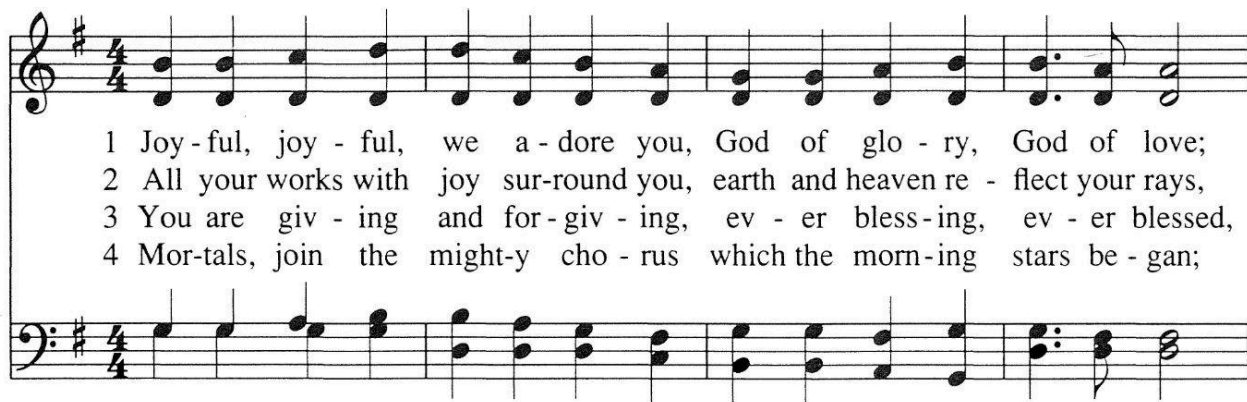
***POSTLUDE**

You may make your way to the Horton Lounge (Hospitality Room) for refreshments and fellowship, or you may remain in the sanctuary for contemplation and reflection.

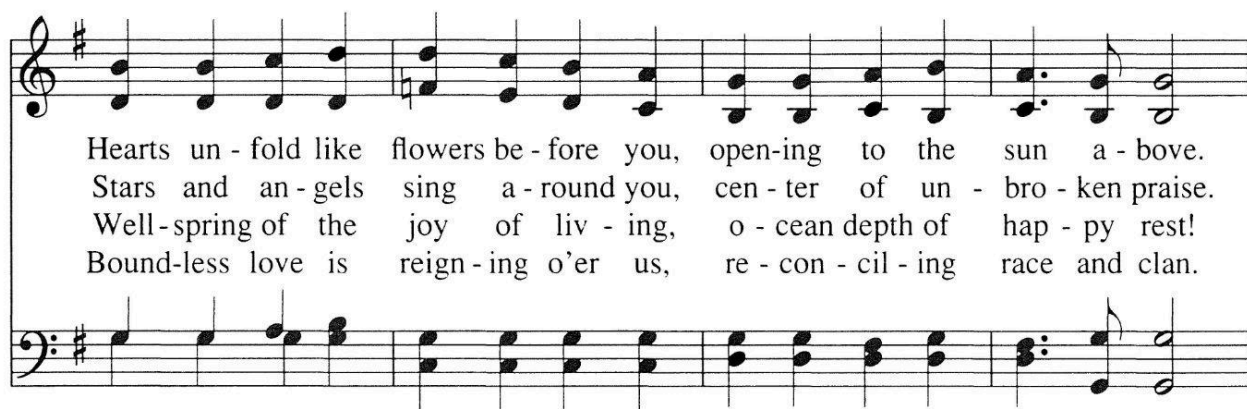
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

Ps. 145:10; Isa. 49:13

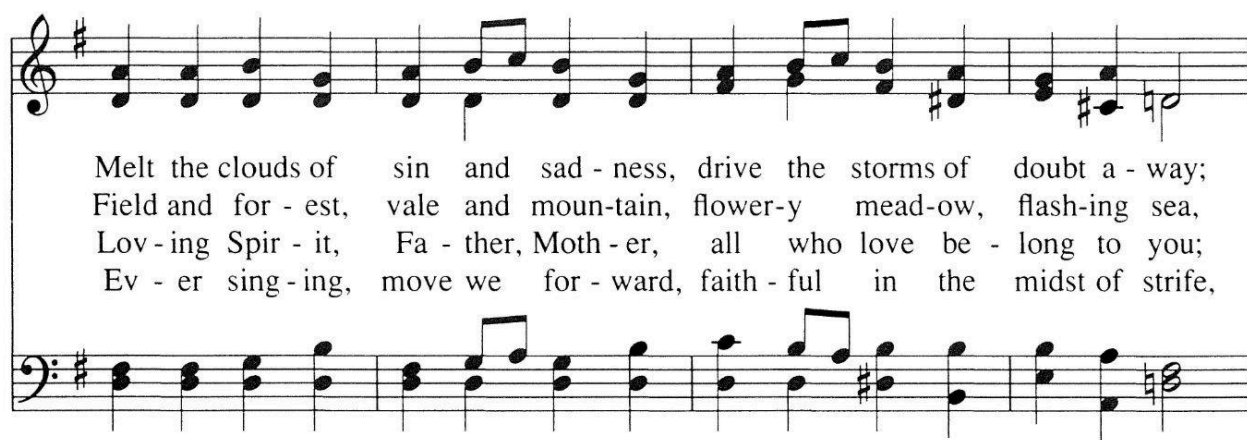
Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.



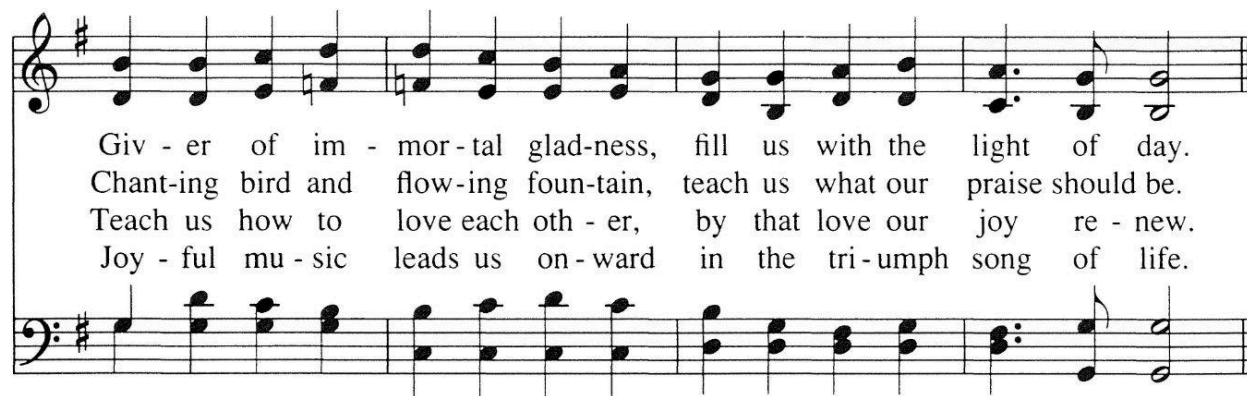
1 Joy-ful, joy-ful, we a-dore you, God of glo-ry, God of love;
 2 All your works with joy sur-round you, earth and heaven re-flect your rays,
 3 You are giv-ing and for-giv-ing, ev-er bless-ing, ev-er blessed,
 4 Mor-tals, join the might-y cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan;



Hearts un-fold like flowers be-fore you, open-ing to the sun a-bove.
 Stars and an-gels sing a-round you, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
 Well-spring of the joy of liv-ing, o-cean depth of hap-py rest!
 Bound-less love is reign-ing o'er us, re-con-cil-ing race and clan.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness, drive the storms of doubt a-way;
 Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
 Lov-ing Spir-it, Fa-ther, Moth-er, all who love be-long to you;
 Ev-er sing-ing, move we for-ward, faith-ful in the midst of strife,



Giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, teach us what our praise should be.
 Teach us how to love each oth-er, by that love our joy re-new.
 Joy-ful mu-sic leads us on-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

Jer. 8:18-22; 46:11; Acts 10:34-43

African-American spiritual; alt.

Refrain

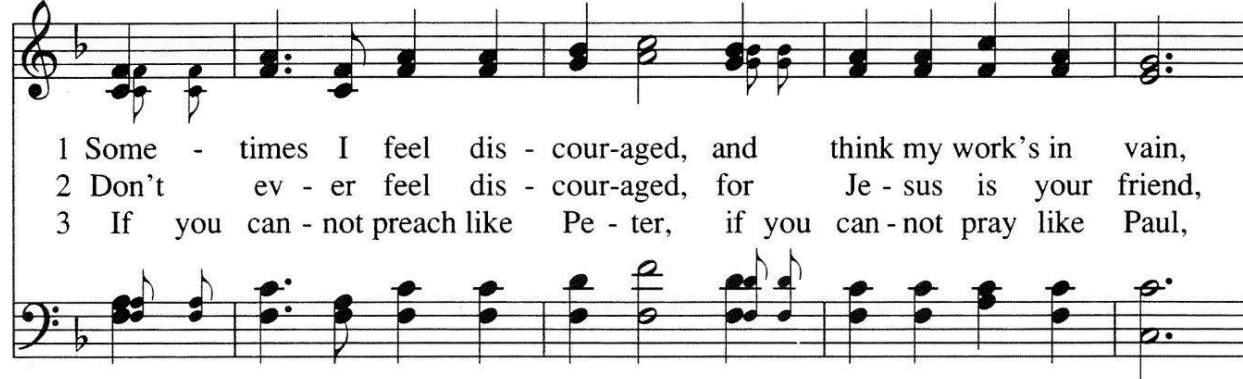


There is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to make the wound-ed whole,

Last time, end

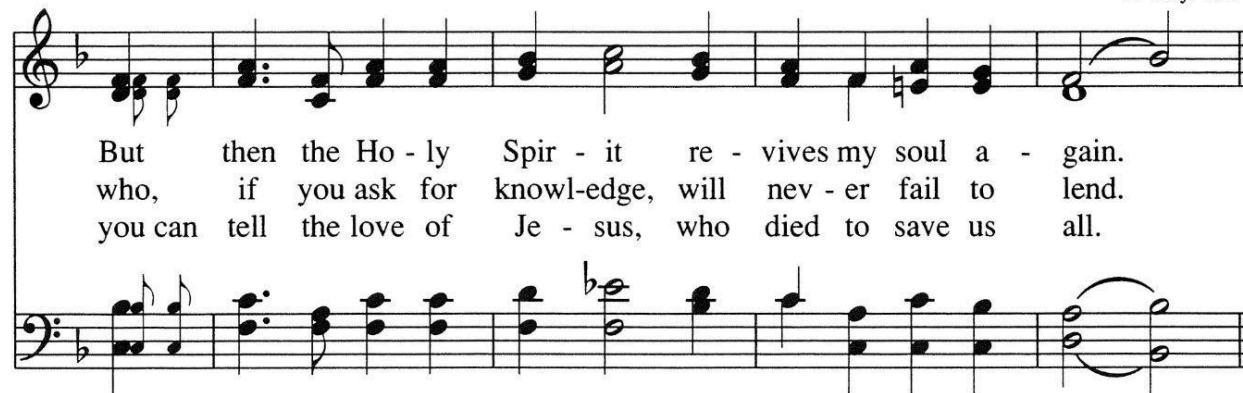


there is a balm in Gil-e-ad, to heal the sin-sick soul.



1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged, and think my work's in vain,
 2 Don't ev - er feel dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend,
 3 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,

to Refrain



But then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
 who, if you ask for knowl-edge, will nev - er fail to lend.
 you can tell the love of Je - sus, who died to save us all.

795

Healer of Our Every Ill

Refrain



Heal - er of our ev - ery ill, light of each to - mor - row,



give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.

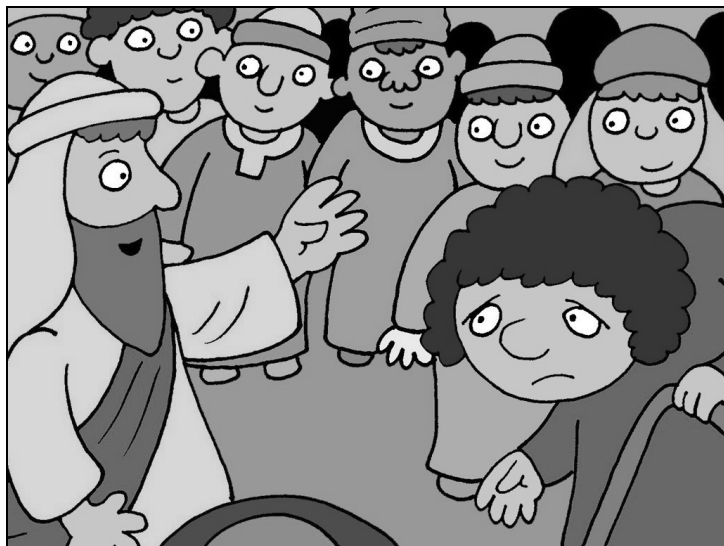


- 1 You who know our fears and sad - ness, grace us with your peace and
- 2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing how your grace is still un -
- 3 Give us strength to love each oth - er, ev - ery sis - ter, ev - ery
- 4 You who know each thought and feel - ing, teach us all your way of



glad - ness; Spir - it of all com - fort, fill our hearts.
 fold - ing, give us all your vi - sion, God of love.
 broth - er; Spir - it of all kind - ness, be our guide.
 heal - ing; Spir - it of com - pas - sion, fill each heart.

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THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sun 8/24	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration
Tue 8/26	12:00 PM	<i>Connector</i> weekly e-news articles are due (every Tuesday)
Wed 8/27	6:30 PM	Small Group Study of "The Chosen" (Horton Lounge)
Thu 8/28	8:00 PM	Alcoholics Anonymous (Horton Lounge)
Sun 8/31	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sun 9/7	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration - Communion Sunday
Sun 9/7	11:30 AM	Church Council
Sun 9/14	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration - Just Peace Sunday
Sun 9/21	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration - Welcome Sunday
Sun 10/5	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration - Hispanic Heritage Sunday & World Communion Sunday
Wed 10/8	1:00 PM	Mission and Social Action Team
Sun 10/12	10:00 AM	Sunday Celebration - Blessing of the Animals

REV. PAUL'S OFFICE HOURS

Mon 8/25: Day off
Tue 8/26: Out of the office (remote)
Wed 8/27: Out of the office (remote)
Thu 8/28: Out of the office (remote)
Fri 8/29: Study and writing day (office)
Sat 8/30: Day off

BE A SUNDAY VOLUNTEER!

Please use the links below to sign up for Sunday volunteer opportunities. Thank you!

Liturgists:	https://tinyurl.com/stjamesuccliturgists
Greeters:	https://tinyurl.com/stjamesuccgreeters
Altar flowers:	https://tinyurl.com/stjamesuccflowers
After-church coffee and fellowship:	https://tinyurl.com/stjamesuccfellowship

Have you remembered St. James UCC in your will?

SMALL GROUP STUDY: SEASON 2 OF “THE CHOSEN”

SMALL GROUP SERIES

“The Chosen” • Season 2

Join us for prayer, reflection, and discussion as we examine “The Chosen,” a video series centered on Jesus and the people who met and followed him.

WEDNESDAYS AT 6:30 PM

St James UCC • Horton Lounge



Facilitated by
Megan O'Neill



All are welcome!
Bring a friend!

Wednesday, August 27 • 6:30 PM (Season 2, Episode 4: “The Perfect Opportunity”)

As opposition to Jesus rises, so does the urgency of his message. What does it mean to follow in times of resistance?

Come be part of the conversation as we reflect on courage, faith, and obedience. All are welcome!

What is the United Church of Christ?

The United Church of Christ traces its roots to the Protestant Reformation, the Pilgrims of the *Mayflower*, and traditions indigenous to the United States. There are five historic “streams” that formed the UCC: Congregational, Christian, Afro-Christian, Evangelical, and Reformed.

- In 1931, the Christian Church, along with the Afro-Christian Convention, joined with the Congregational Churches to form the Congregational Christian Churches. Then, in 1934, the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America united to become the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Both of these denominations merged to form the United Church of Christ in 1957. We are a united and uniting church.
- The UCC weaves God’s message of hope and extravagant welcome with social action for justice and peace, and our response to the demands of our faith is woven into the history of our country.
- We were the first historically white denomination to ordain an African American (1785) and the first in the modern era to ordain a woman (1853). We were the first mainline denomination to ordain an openly gay man (1972) and affirm marriage equality (2005). We were in the forefront of the anti-slavery movement, the Social Gospel movement, and the Civil Rights Movement, taking seriously Jesus’ commandment to “love your neighbor as yourself.”
- Learn more about the UCC’s “firsts”: <https://www.hamburgucc.org/about-the-ucc>

Welcome to St. James United Church of Christ

- We believe that faith is a matter of heart and mind.
- We believe that taking the Bible seriously does not mean taking it literally.
- We believe that God embraces all people equally.
- We believe that we are called to be nothing less than global citizens.
- We believe that the social expression of love is justice.
- We believe that every generation is called to discover new faith traditions.
- We believe that God continues to speak through the actions and words of people today, just as in times of old.



We are a **Creation Justice** church. In the United Church of Christ, Creation Justice churches are “green” churches committed to caring for creation and recognizing how past and current abuse of this gift has caused suffering and inequity. We commit ourselves to confront current and future detriment to our climate and creation in all dimensions of our congregation’s life and beyond the walls of the church.

We are a **Just Peace** church. In the United Church of Christ, Just Peace churches promote peace with justice (a just peace) as an expression of God’s love. We support peaceful opposition to intolerance, injustice, discrimination, and war, and we seek the ways of justice and peace in order to make a difference in our lives and the lives of all who experience injustice and violence.

We are an **Open and Affirming** church. In the United Church of Christ, Open and Affirming churches covenant to welcome and celebrate people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Likewise, we welcome and celebrate people of every faith experience, race, ethnicity, culture, ability, age, background, viewpoint, and life experience. If you struggle with addiction, are recovering from trauma, or have ever felt the pain of exclusion, you are embraced here.

To receive our **weekly e-news**, *The St. James Connector*, scan the QR code or go to:
<https://tinyurl.com/stjamesuccnews>



SCAN ME

For **online giving**, scan the QR code or go to:
<https://www.hamburgucc.org/giving>



SCAN ME

St. James United Church of Christ

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