

# UNION CHURCH OF HINSDALE

137 S Garfield Ave., Hinsdale, IL 60521 • United Church of Christ

UNION CHURCH EXPLORES

## THE THEOLOGY OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP



UNION  
CHURCH  
OF  
HINSDALE

WINTER SERMON SERIES | SUNDAYS @ 9 + 10 A.M.



## *A Prescription for the Blues*

Second Sunday After Epiphany  
January 19, 2025

*Our Welcoming Statement, adopted January 28, 2024:*

*We are all called by God as disciples of Christ. We affirm & welcome all persons as precious to God, just as they are. As a community of faith, in the service of God, we are enriched by our differences including diversity of gender identity and expression, age, marital & economic status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, race, and physical & mental abilities and qualities. We affirm that the Holy Spirit gathers us as a congregation in which all persons are invited to participate equally in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship, sacraments, responsibilities, blessings, concerns, & joys of our community of faith. We pledge to love, encourage, & support one another as the Body of Christ.*

What are we all about at Union Church?

***Living lives of love for God and all people.***

***You are welcome here!***



# A GATHERING IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE 8<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF CREATION

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\* = Those who are able and willing, please stand

**PRELUDE** *Jacob's Ladder* Arr. Bish  
Ollie Townsend

**WELCOME** Robb Knuepfer

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you!**

**\* CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: In the quiet of this sacred space, we gather to remember:

People: **The unending love of the Lord, our constant companion.**

Leader: With each dawn, new mercies greet us,

People: **Like the morning dew, refreshing our souls.**

Leader: Great is Your faithfulness, O God, beyond measure.

People: **Our hearts find hope and strength in You, our eternal portion. Let us worship God.**

**\* HYMN # 423** *Great Is Your Faithfulness*

**\* PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Merciful God, we come before you acknowledging our shortcomings and failures. We confess that we often forget your steadfast love and unending mercies, allowing despair and doubt to overshadow our faith. We admit that we have been impatient, quick to anger, and slow to forgive. We have neglected to show compassion to those in need and have been selfish in our thoughts and actions. Forgive us for the times we have strayed from your path and neglected to trust in your faithfulness. Renew our hearts and minds, O God, and help us to embrace your new mercies each morning. Strengthen our hope in you, our eternal portion, and guide us to live in the light of your grace. Amen.

**\* ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS AND SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Leader: The Peace of Christ be with you!

People: **And also with you!**

**\* GLORIA PATRI**

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,  
world without end! Amen, Amen.*

**LIFE OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY**

**HYMN # 602** *Savior God Above*  
\*Congregation joins for the chorus\*

*\*Children are invited to meet Penny at the front for Sunday School. As the children depart, we will exchange these blessings:  
Congregation: May God be with you there. Children: And may God be with you here.*

**SCRIPTURE READING** *Lamentations 3:21-24* Melissa Mann

**SERMON** *A Prescription for the Blues* Dr. Brad Braxton

**SERMON ANTHEM** *The Lord Is My Light* Lillian Bouknight

## PRAYER, ENDING WITH PRAYER WE LEARNED FROM JESUS

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Zelle  
(Preferred)

## OFFERTORY

### *River Of Life*



*At this time, please sign & pass the Attendance Sheets – they help us care for members & welcome visitors.*

*For e-giving, use the QR code on the right for Zelle (no transaction fees), the QR code on the left to give through Realm, or text "GIVEUCH" to 73256.*

*Thank you for contributing to the life & work of Union Church!*



## \* DOXOLOGY

***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 GRATITUDE

## \* HYMN (See Screen)

*God Is With Us Now*

## BENEDICTION

## REPRISE

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**FLOWERS** – Today's flowers are given in loving memory of Wilfred and Lucy Beck by Richard and JoAnn Beck.

### STAFF AND WORSHIP LEADERS

*(h = he/him/his, s = she/her/hers, t = they/them/theirs)\**

Associate Minister – Grant Glowiak (h/t)

Dir. of Audio & Visual Media – Adam Nakutis (h)

Section Leaders

Associate Minister – Robb Knuepfer (h)

Dir. of Handbells – Elizabeth Jung (s)

Jess Koehn (h)

Dir. of Christian Education – Penny Johnson (s)

Coleman Dziedzic (h)

Dir. of Music and Worship – Stephen C Edwards (h/t)

Dei Nikoi (s)

Tierra Whetstone-Christian (s)

Ushers - Vera Shively, Tom Shively, Diane Kurtz, Karen Botsoe

Trap Set – Kalyan Pathak (h)

Guitars – Andrew Sudhibhasilp (h)

\* Go to <https://tinyurl.com/ymabnh5t> for a guide to gender identity terms

Bass – Ben Dillinger(h)

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### SUNDAY SCHOOL

For younger children kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade will begin in the Sanctuary with their families.

After Hymn # 602, the children will leave and go upstairs to our Sunday School space, returning before the last song.

Also, there is always Sunday School and nursery care for younger children in classroom 129 on the lower level.

### RESTROOMS

To find the gender-neutral restroom, exit through the main doors of the Sanctuary into The Gathering Place. Follow the glass doors on your left until a hallway opens on your left. It is a few steps down that hallway on your right.

Gendered restrooms are located just off The Gathering Space – complete with changing tables on the lower and main levels.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### ANNUAL MEETING

*Next Sunday, January 26, following the 10:00 a.m. Worship Service*

All members are encouraged to stay on January 26 for the Annual Meeting. What happens at an Annual Meeting ?

- The congregation gathers to both recognize the work of those completing terms and elect & install new Ministry members & church officers.
- We vote on changes to the Church Constitution, including adding The Care Ministry, and some wording changes pertinent to Endowment Ministry.
- We engage in an amicable open forum as a church family.

### LEADERSHIP RETREAT

*Saturday, February 1, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., morning bagels & coffee and lunch provided*

\* New this year: All church leaders, those just finishing terms and those newly installed at the Annual Meeting, are invited to gather for this year's Leadership Retreat. "Old" and new leaders will engage in meaningful conversation. This is the opportunity for institutional knowledge to be passed along. All church members are welcome.



### NEW PASTOR LISTENING SESSIONS – PLEASE JOIN FINAL SESSION THIS THURSDAY

The meetings today and on Tuesday are full, but we still have openings for our final session, a Zoom on Thursday, January 23, at 7:00 – 8:30 PM. About 90 members have already signed up and the reviews have been very positive for these meaningful, warm, inclusive sessions! **Please use this QR code to join us.**

These small sessions of just 6-12 members last about 90 minutes. We simply listen to each other's responses to a few questions and move on (distinct from a discussion or debate). If you prefer to have someone help you sign up, please call Adriana in the church office at 630-590-6689.

We look forward to hearing **your** views that will impact what we seek in our next senior pastor!

### GRIEF MINISTRY BEGINNING IN JANUARY 2025

*Two groups, one for women and one for men, meeting in the Lounge, adjacent to the Chapel*

The women's sessions will be on the third Tuesday of the month, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am beginning Tuesday, January 21.

The men's sessions will be on the first Tuesday of the month, from 10:00 am to 11:30 am beginning Tuesday, February 4.

If you have questions, are interested in joining, or know someone who is, please contact Pastor Robb Knuepfer at 312-927-8913 or [rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org](mailto:rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org).

### MATTHEW BIBLE STUDY

*Last Tuesday of the month from January to June, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.*

*In Helen Hall, adjacent the Gathering Space*

We will be hosting a Bible Study on the Gospel of Matthew. Please contact Pastor Robb Knuepfer if you have any questions or would like to join this seminar at 312-927-8913 or by email at [rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org](mailto:rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org).



### DEDICATION OPPORTUNITY FOR ALTAR FLOWERS



Would you like to sponsor a floral arrangement for a Sunday service in the Sanctuary? Perhaps to celebrate an anniversary, birthday, in memory of a loved one, or just because! Contact Gail Weber, [gailweb@att.net](mailto:gailweb@att.net), the Altar Flower Coordinator, for more info or to reserve a date!

### NEED SOMETHING ANNOUNCED IN THE BULLETIN, MIDWEEK EMAIL, OR ONLINE?

Send your text to [communications@uchinsdale.org](mailto:communications@uchinsdale.org). Subject line "Email Blast."

### NEED A MEETING SPACE FOR YOUR AWESOME EVENT?

Contact Adriana Kieffer, [akieffer@uchinsdale.org](mailto:akieffer@uchinsdale.org), to book a space.

## MEET OUR GUEST PREACHER DR. BRAD R. BRAXTON

Dr. Brad Braxton serves as the President and Professor of Public Theology at Chicago Theological Seminary, a progressive graduate school renowned for its leadership in social justice and interfaith engagement. Since 2011, he has also been the Founding Senior Pastor of The Open Church. This inclusive congregation is dedicated to social activism, LGBTQ+ equality, and interfaith collaboration. Although The Open Church primarily gathers online, it maintains strong ties to Baltimore, Maryland, where it was originally founded.

Dr. Braxton holds a Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Emory University, where he was a George W. Woodruff Fellow, a master's degree in theology from the University of Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and a B.A. in religious studies from the University of Virginia, where he was a Jefferson Scholar and a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

Dr. Braxton is the author of five scholarly books exploring the intersection of religion and social justice. His two most recent books, published in 2023, are *Open: Unorthodox Thoughts on God and Community*, a collection of his essays and sermons examining religion from a progressive perspective, and *A Master Class on Being Human: A Black Christian and A Black Secular Humanist on Religion, Race, and Justice*, co-authored with noted secular humanist Dr. Anthony Pinn. This book explores the differences and similarities between black religious and black secular communities in the ongoing struggle for social justice. Additionally, Dr. Braxton's books *No Longer Slaves: Galatians and African American Experience* and *Preaching Paul* are frequently used in seminary courses.

Dr. Braxton is also a seasoned educator who has held professorships at Southern Methodist University, Vanderbilt University, and Wake Forest University, as well as lectureships at Georgetown University, Harvard Divinity School, and McCormick Theological Seminary. His leadership extends beyond academia into cultural, philanthropic, and religious organizations. He formerly served as the Director of the Center for the Study of African American Religious Life at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, the Program Officer for Religion in the Public Sphere at the Ford Foundation in New York City, the Senior Minister of the Riverside Church in New York City, and the Senior Pastor of Douglas Memorial Community Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

Dr. Braxton is an ordained Baptist minister and a highly sought-after lecturer and preacher. In 2007, he preached at Westminster Abbey in London, England, where his sermon on justice and non-violence was part of the bicentennial commemoration of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire. He has also preached and lectured in Benin, Canada, Ghana, and South Africa.



### **LOVE IN ACTION**

**When disaster strikes, the United Church of Christ responds. Together, we can show God's love in action.**

**Thank you for standing with California's communities during this time of unreal hardship. Your generosity will make a difference.\***

*\*100% of your donation will go directly to disaster relief efforts. Every gift matters. Please give today.*



Visit [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) for more information, opportunities to get involved, and ways to donate.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FAMILY FELLOWSHIP SUNDAYS

Share your favorite recipe and a great family story at a future coffee hour. It's easy! Bring a favorite food (bought or baked) and help serve at coffee hour as we learn more about you & yours! The Gathering Committee will handle the rest (coffee, water, baked goods, snacks). Find the link in the weekly email to sign up! Questions? Contact Kathryn Sjoholm 630-750-1483.



### JOIN OUR SIMPLE SUPPER GROUP

Considering joining a simple supper? We are a small group seeking additional members to share food, faith, and friendship. Gather with us for our first meeting of 2025, the evening of Jan 23<sup>rd</sup>. Email Diane Kurtz [flagship77@aol.com](mailto:flagship77@aol.com) for more info.

### UNNAMED STOCK DONATION

If you donated stock in December 2024 and it is not on your giving statement, please reach out to Ann Gleason at 630-590-6654 with the name of the stock. Thank you.

### REV. BILL PETERSON'S CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Pastor Loletta Barrett is coordinating the celebration of life for Rev. Bill Peterson in Claremont, California on January 25. She is wondering if anyone from UCH would like to share any memories or stories about him while he was our interim pastor.

Loletta Barrett, pastor First Friends Church, a Quaker meeting  
13205 Philadelphia St  
Whittier, CA 90601 (original land of the Gabrielino Tongva people)  
562-781-1457  
[pastorffc@verizon.net](mailto:pastorffc@verizon.net)



*The mission of the Care Ministry is to offer compassion, time and support to church members in need.*

**If you need support, please contact Adriana in the Church office** (you will be directed to the right person)  
630-590-6689 or [AKieffer@uchinsdale.org](mailto:AKieffer@uchinsdale.org)

**In an Emergency, contact our Pastoral Care Ordained Minister Rev. Robb Knuepfer**  
312-927-8913 or [rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org](mailto:rknuepfer@uchinsdale.org)

## DON'T MISS A THING!

Keep up with all our upcoming events by following us on Facebook & Instagram and subscribing to our weekly newsletter.

Head over to [www.hinsdale.church](http://www.hinsdale.church), and click on the 'Connect' button for more info!

# BE THE CHURCH

*Protect the environment.*

Care for the poor.

Forgive often.

**Reject racism.**

Fight for the powerless.

*Share earthly and spiritual resources.*

Embrace diversity.

Love God.

Enjoy this life.