

# Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 2nd, 2026 at 10:30am (Onsite & Online)



umstead park  
UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

## GATHERING

Welcome and Time of Greeting

Rev. Tyler Ung

Invocation

Kathy Austin

## Meditation

*Understand from the first this certainty. Butterflies don't write books, neither do lilies or violets. Which doesn't mean they don't know, in their own way, what they are. That they don't know they are alive—that they don't feel, that action upon which all consciousness sits, lightly or heavily. Humility is the prize of the leaf-world. Vainglory is the bane of us, the humans.*

- Mary Oliver

## Prelude

David Wilson

## \*Call to Worship

Rev. Tyler Ung

One: Beckoned to this place of belonging, we, of Umstead Park United Church of Christ, with body, mind, and spirit, gather to worship, serve, and proclaim God, unknowable mystery whose center is love, and Jesus the Christ, who makes this loving mystery known.

Many: **With inarticulate words and unfinished lives, we yearn to further embody this holy love, shaping the future as partners with God, who dances and weeps with us along the way.**

*-from the UPUCC Covenant*

## \*Gathering Hymn

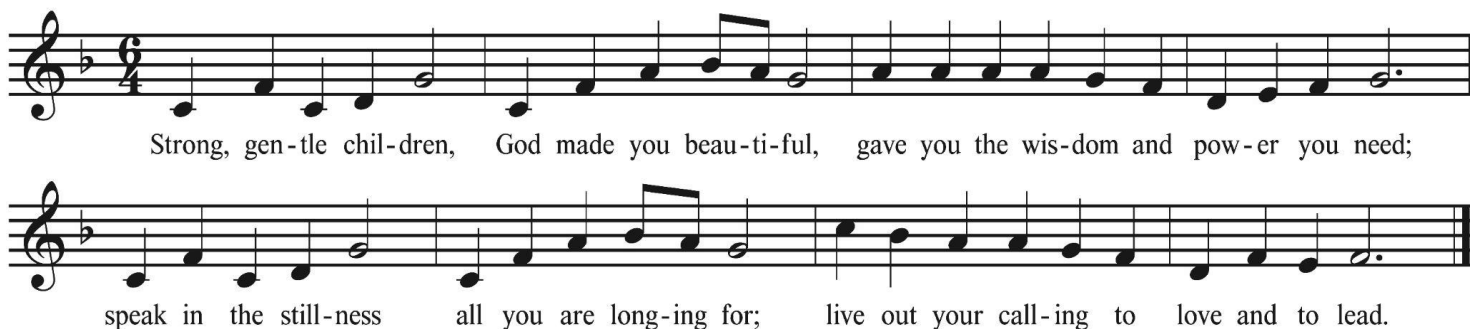
#31, "All Things Bright and Beautiful"

Congregation

## HEARING AND RESPONDING

### Time with Children

Rev. Tyler Ung



## Reading of Scripture

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-22; *The Inclusive Bible*  
(see insert)

Kathy Austin

## Sermon

"From the Earth"

Rev. Tyler Ung

## Prayers of the People

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Rev. Paula Womack



*You are invited to share your joys and concerns. People onsite can raise a hand and a microphone will be brought to them. People online can type their requests in the chat. We ask that you share carefully, knowing that we do not know what traumas people carry with them into this gathering and striving to not trigger or harm our neighbors. After each person shares, we will respond with: "**This is our prayer.**" To submit prayer requests for the weekly email, visit [tinyurl.com/upuccprayers](https://tinyurl.com/upuccprayers), or scan the QR code.*

## Celebration of Gifts

Rev. Paula Womack



*In addition to placing gifts into the offering basket, you may also visit [upucc.org/giving](https://upucc.org/giving) or scan the QR code here to make an online contribution.*

## COMMUNION

Rev. Tyler Ung

### Remembering and Prayer of Thanksgiving

#### The Prayer That Jesus Taught

words adapted by Mark Miller from "The Lord's Prayer"

Our God, in heaven, holy is your name.

Your reign come, your will done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and help us forgive, as we have been forgiven.

In the time of trial lead us into light,

for yours is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

#### Communion Liturgy

One: As we share in the bread, may we remember and give thanks for the life that Jesus lived.

**Many: As we share in the cup, may we remember and give thanks for the lives that we are living.**

One: As we receive the fruits of Spirit, we celebrate the communion of all things. Creator, Christ, and Spirit dance as one. So may it always be. Come for all things are ready.

*Those onsite are invited to come forward at this time. The bread may be dipped into the cup and then eaten. The cup contains juice. The center station contains gluten free bread. Those online can prepare their elements and receive words of blessing from the online celebrant.*

#### \*Communion Hymn

#396, "Where Charity and Love Prevail"

Congregation

## SENDING INTO THE WORLD

### Reading an Excerpt of the UPUCC Covenant

Congregation

One: On our path to a closer communion with God, we will search the scriptures with open-minded thoughtfulness;

**Many: taking the Bible seriously while knowing it cannot always be taken literally**

One: We will seek, in our quest for truth, the presence of the divine: in worship and prayer; in all of creation

**Many: in every person, sacred in worth; and in faiths and traditions other than our own; while always appreciating with awe the mysteries inherent in life**

One: With our steps toward a mutual relationship with the wider world, we will live justice as the social expression of love,

**Many: and peace as the present manifestation of the world to come**

One: This we know:

**Many: We do not walk alone. God is present with us.**

### Welcoming a New Member

One: Emily, as you join this community as an official covenant partner, do you promise to uphold this covenant?

Emily: I do.

One: And do you, church family, promise to welcome and care for Emily, covenanting with her for the journey ahead?

**Many: We do!**

One: Let all the people say...

**Many: Amen!**

*"Emily moved to Raleigh in 2023 and loves living here with her partner, Zac, and beloved cat, Lola. She is lucky to now live in the same city as her mother, who she adores spending time with. Emily enjoys being outside, connecting with others, and expressing her faith through acts of service. She is grateful to have found a community that accepts her exactly as she is."*



### \*Sending Hymn

#569, "Touch the Earth Lightly"

Congregation

### Announcements

## \*Affirmation of Community

Kathy Austin

One: We believe that all people are God's people, that every child is holy, that every person is a part of the sacred family.

**Many: We believe that God's love embraces all, and that to exclude any person would be contrary to the message of Jesus.**

One: We proclaim that this community of faith, Umstead Park UCC, will strive to be as open as the radical realm of God, and as liberating as the love of Christ.

**Many: And so we journey into our hopeful future with joy, pledging to offer each other welcome, compassion and care. May God grant us wisdom, grace, and guidance in our life together.**

## \*Benediction

Rev. Tyler Ung

## Postlude

David Wilson

# umstead park

UNITED CHURCH of CHRIST

## Church Staff

Lindsay Cooper, she/her  
Nursery Director

Ellen Fiedler, she/her  
Youth Director

Rev. Tyler Ung, they/them  
Senior Minister

Gwen Vass, she/her  
Financial Administrator

Cody Walter Welch, he/him/they/them  
Teaching Intern

David Wilson, he/him  
Director of Music

Rev. Paula Womack, she/her  
Associate Pastor

### A special "thank you" to this week's volunteers:

Nevin Fouts, AV Team  
Bill Yoder (he/him), AV Team  
Amy Lewis (she/her), Coffee Set Up  
Ada McKerrell, Greeter  
Colin McKerrell, Greeter  
Kathy Austin (she/her), Lay Leader  
Debbie Beroth, Usher  
Bob Martin (he/him), Usher



### Visiting?

You are invited to fill out the online visitor form so that we can get to know you!



### Giving

Scan the QR code to make a one-time or recurring donation!

We at  
Umstead Park  
United Church of Christ  
welcome and affirm all  
as we journey to seek  
the divine, to embody loving  
community, and to strive for  
justice as a progressive  
community of  
faith.

# Supplemental Hymns and Texts

## Reading of Scripture

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-22; *The Inclusive Bible*

Kathy Austin

<sup>4</sup>These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

At the time when God made the heavens and the earth, <sup>5</sup>there was still no wild bush on the earth nor had any wild plant sprung up, for God had not yet sent rain to the earth, and there was no human being to till the soil. <sup>6</sup>Instead, a flow of water would well up from the ground and irrigate the soil.

<sup>7</sup> So God fashioned an earth creature out of the clay of the earth, and blew into its nostrils the breath of life. And the earth creature became a living being.

<sup>8</sup> God planted a garden to the east, in Eden—"Land of Pleasure"—and placed in it the earth creature that had been made. <sup>9</sup> Then God caused every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, to spring from the soil. In the center of the garden was the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

<sup>15</sup> Then God took the earth creature and settled it in the garden of Eden so that it might cultivate and care for the land. <sup>16</sup> God commanded the earth creature,

"You may eat as much as you like  
from any of the trees of the garden—

<sup>17</sup> except the Tree of  
the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

You must not eat from that tree,  
for on the day you eat from that tree,  
that is the day you will die—yes, die."

<sup>18</sup> Then God said, "It is not good for the earth creature to be alone. I will make a fitting companion for it." <sup>19</sup> So from the soil God formed all the various wild beasts and all the birds of the air, and brought them to the earth creature to be named. Whatever the earth creature called each one, that became its name. <sup>20</sup> The earth creature gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of the air, and all the wild animals.

But none of them proved to be a fitting companion, <sup>21</sup> so God made the earth creature fall into a deep sleep, and while it slept, God divided the earth creature in two, then closed up the flesh from its side. <sup>22</sup> God then fashioned the two halves into male and female, and presented them to one another.

# Announcements

## **Nertz Meet-Up Group | August 10th at 6:30pm**

David Wilson has started a Raleigh Nertz Meet-Up group, which will meet this month on Monday, August 10th at 6:30pm! If interested, RSVP to the Meetup group at [www.meetup.com/raleigh-nertz-meetup](http://www.meetup.com/raleigh-nertz-meetup), scan the QR code, or contact David directly in person or via email.



## **NW Raleigh Board Games MeetUp | August 20th at 6:30pm**

 In keeping with our Ministry Plan of "Connecting with Courage and Care," we are hosting a monthly game night that is open to those in our surrounding neighborhoods and the Triangle in general. To RSVP, scan the QR code to join the MeetUp group or by email David Wilson.

## **End of Summer Cook Out - Sign Up Now! | August 30th after Worship**

Your Fellowship Lead Team is cooking up some end of summer fun – literally!! On Sunday, August 30th following service, your Fellowship Lead Team is hosting an end of summer cookout. We will provide burgers and dogs – and vegetarian options of each – which will be cooked on UPUCC's very own grill. Any volunteer griller masters are more than welcome! If you have any safe yard games you would like to bring, we would welcome that! There might even be prizes! So, be sure to save the date, August 30th for fun and fellowship! You may access the Sign Up Genius for sides and desserts by scanning the QR code.



## **Sign-Up for Fall Choir | Rehearsals begin Sept. 2nd!**

 The Fall choir runs from Sept. to Christmas, and we hope you'll give it a try! If you love music and want to be a part of a loving community, sign up via the QR code! This is a great opportunity to live into our Ministry Plan of Connecting with Courage & Care! Talk to David if you have any questions, or to schedule a vocal check-up!

## **Kick-Off Sunday | September 13th**

Are you passionate about your group, task force, lead team, or any other part of our church community? We need you on September 13th for our Kick-Off Sunday! We're inviting a representative from each group to host a table in the worship space after service. This is a fantastic opportunity to meet new people, share what your group is all about, and help others find their place at UPUCC.



Don't miss this chance to help make our Kick-Off Sunday a success! Please sign up to represent your group by September 6. You can sign up using the QR code or by emailing us at [office@upucc.org](mailto:office@upucc.org).

## **Covenant Leadership Circle Opening — We're calling you!**

We have an opening on the CLC for a Covenant Partner to serve as a CLC member through April of 2028. We encourage anyone interested to contact either Tyler, Paula, Gia or any member of the CLC. We would like to identify anyone interested by August 21st. More information in the CLC section below!

## **Our Whole Lives (OWL): An Opportunity for Our Congregation**

This fall, Umstead Park UCC is partnering with other local churches to offer Our Whole Lives (OWL), a comprehensive, values-based sexuality education program for children and youth. In addition to the children's sessions, we will host parent and caregiver gatherings during select OWL dates, providing a space for conversation, learning, and mutual support.

Whether or not you have a child participating in OWL, there are several ways to support this ministry. You can:

- Participate in the parent and caregiver sessions.
- Help provide or serve snacks and refreshments.
- Assist with welcoming and hospitality.

If you are interested in participating or volunteering in any capacity, please contact Amy Walter or Rev. Tyler Ung. We hope you'll consider supporting this important ministry as we help families navigate these conversations together.

## **Common Cause's Guide to Kickstart Your Voting Plan**

Start now! This Guide helps you learn about the candidates and the voting process in North Carolina. Get the latest on Voter ID requirements and double-checking your registration this year. Once have your plan, you are ready to help a neighbor or friend. Sign up to assist the Ladies at Healing Transitions at the PACE table beginning in August. Scan the QR code to access the voting guide.



## **UPUCC Celebrates Volunteers**

On Saturday, July 25th, the UPUCC Staff provided a BBQ luncheon for all of the volunteers who gave their time during the 2025-2026 program year. UPUCC is a beloved community, and only works because of all the volunteers who offer crucial support. Thank you for everything you do!

## **Welcome Ellen Fiedler to the UPUCC Staff!**

We are pleased to welcome Ellen Fiedler (she/her) to the UPUCC staff! She is our new Youth Director, and has already been busy planning opportunities for the youth to gather and share in community! Ellen is a lifelong North Carolinian with a passion for creating spaces where people feel welcomed, valued, and empowered. She earned her BA in Human Service Studies from Elon University and her MSW with a concentration in Community, Management, and Policy Practice from UNC-Chapel Hill. Ellen's interest in religious programming began during her first year at Elon when she started working at the Truitt Center for Religious and Spiritual Life. Her experience engaging with students and staff of diverse religious, spiritual, and secular identities sparked a passion for meaningful interfaith engagement. In addition to her work at UPUCC, Ellen is a health educator and works with youth to design and implement public health projects in their communities. Through this work, she has developed a deep appreciation for the creativity, insight, and leadership that young people bring to the table when they are given the opportunity to do so. She strongly believes that helping youth discover their capacity to lead and create positive change is one of the most meaningful things adults can do.



## Help Host Healing Transitions on First Sundays

We host our friends from Healing Transitions on the first Sunday of every month. If you would like to help with food, drink, and fellowship, sign up via the link on the website, or at the QR code. Get to know our neighbors!



## Hiring Teaching Intern



The Teaching Intern role is a valuable opportunity to gain hands-on experience in curriculum development, classroom management, and faith-based teaching within a supportive and progressive community environment. This includes teaching Sunday School classes and preparing lessons and materials.

## Sunday Volunteer Opportunities

Please consider joining us to provide an extravagant Sunday Welcome to all-volunteer below to be a Greeter, Usher, Lay Leader, or Barista (Coffee Set Up and Clean Up). Scan the QR code to access the Sign-Up Genius.



## UCC Connections



Urge Congress to Protect the Sacred Right to Vote! Voting is a sacred right and must be protected. Democracy honors the sacred worth of all human beings by recognizing that we all have a spark of the divine that allows us to shape our own destiny. But that right is currently under assault.

The Voting Rights Act (VRA) stands as one of the great achievements of American democracy. Signed into law on August 6, 1965, this landmark legislation outlawed discriminatory voting practices, literacy tests, collection of poll taxes, bureaucratic restrictions, and other obstacles denying people of color the right to vote as citizens of the United States of America. The passage of the VRA was profound, signaling a direct challenge to discriminatory practices of overt racism and racial injustice across the country.

Yet the protections the VRA built have been steadily dismantled. This matters because gerrymandering, the intentional drawing of congressional districts' boundaries to give one party or group an advantage, is a widespread issue of injustice around the country. We are experiencing voting restrictions we last saw before the VRA was passed, but we must not allow further loss of progress. The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2025, or H.R. 14, would safeguard every person's right to vote.

Democracy is the political enactment of a spiritual idea; we are all children of God, and therefore, we all deserve a voice in the direction of our country. When people's votes are suppressed, or laws are passed to make it harder to vote, that in turn diminishes our democracy. The late Representative and voting rights advocate, John R. Lewis, once said, "the right to vote is precious, almost sacred." Tell your members of Congress today to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act! Scan the QR Code for more information!

## Want to Submit an Announcement?

To submit an announcement for publication on the website and the bulletin, simply scan this QR code and fill out the online form! To submit an announcement in time for the Friday email, the deadline is the preceding Tuesday by 11:59pm.



## Submit Photos and Videos of UPUCC Happenings

Did you know that we have an online Google Photos album? It's chock-full of moments from UPUCC past and present, and you are invited to add your own! Simply scan the QR code, click the "Add Photos" button pictured here, and select which photos you would like to submit to the album. Alternatively, you may email photos or videos to [umsteadparkucc@gmail.com](mailto:umsteadparkucc@gmail.com)!



## Visiting With Us Today?

We're so glad that you spent your Sunday with us—we would love to get to know you better! You are invited to fill out the visitor form by scanning the QR code so that we can connect with you about our church and add you to our email list!



## Mutual Care Network

The UPUCC Mutual Care Network was designed to build a culture of helping one another, to foster genuine connections, and to ensure that no one feels alone. There are 2 parts: (1) Identifying volunteers who are willing to help out when covenant partners have needs. We want to emphasize that signing up and letting us know how you can help DOES NOT mean that you must respond to every request, but rather helps us know who might have the needed skills and/or desire to assist with a particular request; (2) Providing a way for covenant partners to easily request care help when they need it. We've identified individuals who are willing to provide care in areas such as running errands, tech help, pet care and so on. Please let us know what you are needing and we will do our best to pair you up with someone ASAP. Join the Mutual Care Network by scanning the QR code included here.



## Follow Us on Social Media!

Facebook: [UmsteadParkUCC](https://www.facebook.com/UmsteadParkUCC) | Instagram: [UmsteadParkUCC](https://www.instagram.com/UmsteadParkUCC) | BlueSky: [upucc.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/upucc.bsky.social)

## Receive Email Updates!

Each week we send out an e-mail full of updates about upcoming events, Sunday services, as well as joys and concerns of our church family. If you would like to receive these emails, scan the QR code here and submit your email address!



# Covenant Leadership Circle

The purpose of this section is to update you on the work of the Covenant Leadership Circle (CLC). We hope that this enables you to have a more thorough understanding of what happens behind the scenes at UPUCC, and to discover opportunities to join us in actualizing new ideas!

## CLC Members:

**Moderator:** Gia Hafler

**Moderator-Elect:** Open Seat

**Treasurer:** Vickie Teal

**Secretary:** Sarah Bellak

**Facilities Lead:** Gary Sanders

**At-Large:** Elliot Acosta

**At-Large:** Laura Carter-Scheid

**At-Large:** David Frink

**At-Large:** Bob Martin

| Financial Results                                                                                                                      |           |           |           |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                        | June      | YTD       | 2026      | Difference / Remaining |
| General Offerings                                                                                                                      | \$21,828  | \$129,160 | \$304,882 | -\$175,722             |
| Total Income                                                                                                                           | \$22,723  | \$144,220 | \$331,466 | -\$187,246             |
| Total Expenses                                                                                                                         | \$33,494  | \$169,890 | \$386,585 | -\$220,696             |
| Net Income                                                                                                                             | -\$10,771 | -\$25,669 | -\$55,119 | \$29,450               |
| *As a reminder, the 2026 Operating Budget projects a net income deficit of \$55,000 which will be offset by the Operating Fund Reserve |           |           |           |                        |

**Next Meeting:** Sunday, August 9th at 12:00pm in the UPUCC Library and Online. All are welcome!

Our church's leadership met this month to review our ministry priorities, celebrate progress, and make several decisions that will help strengthen our ministry in the months ahead.

## **CLC Opening — We're Calling You!**

We have an opening on the CLC for a Covenant Partner to serve as a CLC member through April of 2028. As you know, the CLC meets on the second Sunday of each month in the library or virtually. While the CLC approves church operations, much of our time spent is in helping us to create and implement elements of our Ministry Plan. We encourage anyone interested to contact either Tyler, Paula, Gia or any member of the CLC. We would like to identify anyone interested by August 21st. In late August and Early September, we will have a quick conversation with those interested followed by a Congregation Vote in September.

## **Financial Update**

The financial outlook remains encouraging. Year-to-date giving is tracking close to expectations, and expenses continue to come in slightly under budget. Any monthly surplus helps strengthen our financial reserves. In addition, the June financial report reflects the first time our ministry plan has been directly aligned with our budget, making it easier to see how our financial resources support our shared mission. At this time, approximately \$17,471 remains available to be allocated toward ministry priorities.

## **Looking Ahead: Communications and Technology**

A significant portion of the meeting focused on how we can better communicate our mission, both within the congregation and throughout the wider community.

It became clear that our current staffing capacity is not enough to support the vision we have for our website, digital communications, technology infrastructure, and online engagement. Much of this work continues to rely on volunteers, and several important needs have grown beyond what is sustainable.

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\* Please rise in body or in spirit.

To move this work forward thoughtfully, two new task forces will be formed:

- **Communications**, which will focus on messaging, publicity, community engagement, and helping people connect with our church.
- **Technology**, which will evaluate our digital platforms, technology infrastructure, website needs, technical support, and whether our current systems are the best fit for the future.

These groups will help shape recommendations for staffing, technology, and long-term strategy. Volunteers will be invited through the Friday email, and we encourage anyone with interest or experience in these areas to consider participating.

### **Racial Equity Workshop**

The group also voted to continue exploring the possibility of hosting a racial equity workshop in partnership with Organize Against Racism (OAR). Tyler will gather additional information about costs and logistics before a final decision is made.

The hope is to offer this workshop not only to our congregation but also to educators, neighboring faith communities, and others in the wider Raleigh area. This opportunity aligns closely with our ministry priorities and offers another meaningful way for our church to serve the broader community.

### **Website Support**

To ensure our website continues to function well while longer-term technology plans are being developed, approval was given for a month-to-month website support package. This temporary approach provides stability while the new technology task force evaluates future needs. Anyone who is able to help Christy move website content is encouraged to reach out.

### **Celebrating Our Volunteers**

An initial budget of \$1,500 was approved to support volunteer appreciation efforts in 2026. This year's Volunteer Appreciation event continues to take shape, and we're grateful for everyone who gives their time, talents, and energy to the life of our church.

### **Ministry Updates**

Several ministry teams shared updates:

- Our Out! Raleigh and Guns to Gardens teams reported strong community engagement, with more detailed reflections scheduled for next month's meeting.
- The Family, Youth, and Children team continues developing ministry opportunities for young adolescents and their caregivers. They also hope to bring in a guest speaker in the future to address topics affecting today's youth.

As always, thank you for your continued support, prayers, and participation as we continue discerning how God is calling our congregation to serve both one another and our wider community.