

# ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

August 13th, 2023

11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

(Pentecost 11/Trinity 10/Ordinary 19-A)

A Service of the Word



*The Disciples See Christ Walking on the Water*

by Henry Ossawa Tanner

(Museum: Des Moines Art Center) canvas print by Les Classic

[https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Tanner\\_WalkWater\\_710.jpg](https://www.workingpreacher.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Tanner_WalkWater_710.jpg)



August 13th, 2023  
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Pentecost 11/Trinity 10/Ordinary 19-A  
A Service of the Word

**“When in doubt, throw doubt out and have a little faith.”**  
- E.A. Buccchianeri-

## WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

*\*please stand as you are able*

### Welcome and Announcements

### Prelude - *Keith Konet*

### \*Call to Worship

One: God moves among us.

**Many: We welcome your presence, God, no matter by what means you arrive.**

One: Reach out your hand and I shall always be with you.

**Many: We reach for you, Jesus, and trust that you are present when we fear or ache.**

One: Your presence, O Lord Jesus, calms the seas as it calms our hearts.

**Many: May we rest assured that you are ever-present with us, assuaging our worries as you love our anxieties into softness.**

### \*Invocation

**God of so many names, you command us to come to you, yet we are doubtful of our abilities to make the journey. We are so uncertain of our steps, yet we long to have the faith in ourselves that you have in us.**

**Be with us and embolden us through faith to rise as we are called to walk with you and walk alongside those whose need companionship.**

**Show us how to be children of God who can set skepticism down and take up the mantle of faithful presence. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.**

**\*Hymn – NCH 4 - Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You vv. 1, 2, & 3**

**Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You**

Author: Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.

Tune: HYMN TO JOY 8.7.8.7.D.

Composer: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824

Adapter and Harmonizer: Edward Hodges, 1846

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**1 Joyful, joyful, we adore you,  
God of glory, God of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before you,  
opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the storms of doubt away;  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.**

**2 All your works with joy surround you,  
earth and heaven reflect your rays,  
Stars and angels sing around you,  
center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain  
teach us what our praise should be.**

**3 You are giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blessed,  
Well-spring of the joy of living,  
ocean depth of happy rest!  
Loving Spirit, Father, Mother,  
all who love belong to you;  
Teach us how to love each other,  
by that love our joy renew.**

**A READING OF THE WORD**

**First Reading: 1 Kings 19:8-18**

*In this selection of the Hebrew scriptures, the prophet Elijah had been on the run from King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. In the previous verses, Elijah was so weary he wanted to die, but an angel from God made him get up and eat twice so that he had the strength to continue on his journey. In these verses, Elijah complained to God that there was no one left in Israel faithful to God, that they had all turned away from God. Elijah seemed to have forgotten that in the previous chapter Obadiah, King Ahab's servant in charge of the palace, remained faithful to God, to the point of hiding 100 prophets loyal to God in two caves with bread and water. So Elijah was not the only one—but he certainly felt like it. Elijah felt that no one was left, so God told Elijah that God would draw near to him.*

*However, God was not present in the ways that ancient deities were often made known. God was not present in the wind, earthquake, or fire—but only in the silence. Not in the forces of destruction, not in the assurance of answers, but in the quietness. That’s when Elijah wrapped his face (because in the ancient world the belief was if you saw the face of God, you would not live) and stood at the entrance to the cave. There, Elijah spoke with God, and even though he repeated again his belief that he was the only faithful one left, God showed him that he was not. There were others in Israel who had not bowed to the other gods. While Elijah’s work was not yet finished, God showed him there would be new kings and even a new prophet. The distress, discomfort and depression Elijah felt would not last forever. Elijah would receive help, and relief.*

**19** 8 Elijah got up and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. 9 There Elijah went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of YHWH came to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

10 Elijah replied, “I have been very zealous for YHWH God Omnipotent. The people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death by the sword. I am the only one left, and now they’re trying to kill me, too.”

11 God said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of YHWH, for YHWH is about to pass by.”

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountain apart and shattered the rocks by YHWH’s power—but YHWH was not in the whirlwind. After the wind there was an earthquake—but YHWH was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake came a fire—but YHWH was not in the fire. And after the fire came a sound of sheer silence.

13 When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

14 Elijah replied, “I have been very zealous for YHWH God Omnipotent. The people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death by the sword. I am the only one left, and now they’re trying to kill me, too.”

15 YHWH told Elijah, “Go back the way you came, to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael as ruler of Aram (*Syria*). 16 Also anoint Jehu ben-Nimshi as ruler over Israel, and anoint Elisha ben-Shaphat, from Abel Meholah, to succeed you as prophet. 17 Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. 18 Yet I reserve 7,000 in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Ba’al and all whose mouths have not kissed his images.”

**Psalm Response: Psalm 85: 8-13 (Responsively)**

*Psalm 85 is a song of God’s faithfulness even though the people have gone astray. In verses 8-13, the psalmist concludes that for those who are faithful, for those who remain in awe, God will bring all good things together. Poetically, the psalmist imagines steadfast love and faithfulness meeting, righteousness and peace greeting each other in an embrace. Faithfulness springs up from the ground while righteousness reaches down from the sky. God draws forth everything together in goodness and leads the people in the way of peace and righteousness.*

**85** 8 I will listen to what you have to say, God—  
a voice that speaks of peace, peace  
for your people and your friends  
so long as they don't return to their folly.

**9 Your salvation is near for those who revere you  
and your glory will dwell in our land.**

10 Love and faithfulness have met;  
justice and peace have embraced.

**11 Fidelity will sprout from the earth  
and justice will lean down from heaven.**

12 God will give us what is good,  
and our land will yield its harvest.

**13 Justice will march before you, God,  
and peace will prepare the way for your steps.**

#### **Second Reading: Roman 10:5-15**

*The Epistle reading continues its series in Romans with these verses in chapter 10. The apostle Paul, writing to the church in Rome, explains that it is by faith that people live out their belief, not by the law. Faith leads us to confession. We cannot confess what we do not believe. It is through belief that we live into God's ways. This faith is available to all people of all backgrounds. However, no one can believe if they haven't had the faith shared with them, so believers must share the good news, for they are sent by God to do so.*

**10** 5 Moses writes about the righteousness that comes from the Law: "Those who do these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Don't say in your heart, 'Who will ascend to heaven?'" —that is, to bring Christ down—7 "or 'Who will descend into the underworld?'" —that is, to bring Christ up from the dead. 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart." This is the Word of faith. 9 For if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Sovereign and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved. 10 Faith in the heart leads to being put right with God, confession on the lips to our deliverance.

11 Scripture says, "No one who believes in God will be put to shame." 12 Here there is no difference between Jew and Greek; all have the same Creator, rich in mercy toward those who call: 13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Most High will be saved."

14 How then can they call on the One in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in the One about whom they have not heard? And how can they hear if no one preaches to them? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As scripture says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the Good News!"

#### **Gospel Reading: Matthew 14:22:33**

*After feeding the crowds, the disciples had traveled across the lake in a boat, but Jesus had remained behind to dismiss the crowds and to have some time to pray alone on the mountain.*

*The boat had drifted away in the evening due to the winds and the waves, so that morning, Jesus rejoined them by walking across the lake. The disciples were afraid, but Jesus encouraged them and told them it was him. Peter challenged Jesus, saying if it was him, Jesus should call for Peter to come out of the boat. Jesus called for Peter, and Peter took a few steps, but then he noticed the wind, became afraid, and started to sink. Jesus reached for Peter, but questioned him as to why he doubted. The rest of the disciples worshiped Jesus, proclaiming Jesus as God's Own.*

**14** 22 Jesus insisted that the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side. 23 Having sent the crowds away, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray, remaining there alone as night fell. 24 Meanwhile the boat, already a thousand yards from shore, was being tossed about in the waves which had been raised by the fierce winds.

25 At about three in the morning, Jesus came walking toward them on the lake. 26 When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they were terrified. "It is a ghost!" they said, and in their fear they began to cry out.

27 Jesus hastened to reassure them: "Don't worry, it's me! Don't be afraid!"

28 Peter spoke up and said, "If it is really you, tell me to come to you across the water."

29 "Come!" Jesus said. So Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. 30 But when he saw how strong the wind was, he became frightened. He began to sink, and cried out, "Save me!"

31 Jesus immediately stretched out his hand and caught Peter. "You have so little faith!" Jesus said to him. "Why did you doubt?"

32 Once they had climbed into the boat, the wind died down. 33 Those, who were in the boat, showed great reverence, declaring to Jesus, "You are indeed God's Own!"

### **Choral Response – NCH 283 – Spirit of the Living God**

*Author and Composer: Daniel Iverson, 1926  
© 1935, 1963 Birdwing Music (A Div. of the Sparrow Corp.)  
Choir: Keith Konet, Barbara Rossington, and Bob Buckew, 1926  
A Capella*

### **Reflection – On the Sea of Life - Rev. Scott Rosenstein**

#### **WE RESPOND**

#### **\*Prayer of Response**

**God of our Ancestors, remind us of their stories when we are discouraged.**

**Remind us of the trials they faced when we are hurt by other's actions, both intentionally and unintentionally.**

**Remind us of how their faith was renewed and restored when we are full of doubt and despair.**

Encourage us in the stories of their faithfulness.

Remind us that when we desire concrete and clear responses, you offer us silence, but it is not meant to discourage. It is a silence that acknowledges the gravity of our pain and loneliness, a silence that reminds us that sometimes even you know that words will not bring comfort.

May we sit in that silence with you, and with one another, and remember we are not alone. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, and may we look to them for inspiration and encouragement. Amen.

**\*Hymn – NCH 441 – Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me**

**Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me**

Author: Edward Hopper, 1871: alt.

Tune: PILOT 7.7.7.7.7.7.

Composer: John E. Gould, 1871

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**1 Jesus, Savior, pilot me  
over life's tempestuous sea;  
Unknown waves before me roll,  
hiding rock and treacherous shoal;  
Chart and compass ever be;  
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.**

**2 As a mother stills her child,  
you can hush the ocean wild;  
Boisterous waves obey your will  
when you say to them, "Be still."  
Wondrous sovereign of the sea,  
Jesus, Savior, pilot me.**

**3 When at last I near the shore,  
and the fearful breakers roar,  
Keeping me from peaceful rest,  
then, while leaning on your breast,  
May I hear your words so true,  
"Fear not, I will pilot you."**

**Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings**

The gifts of faith come to us in many ways, and the miracles we witness are not always so obvious. May the manifestation of God's great abundance in our lives inspire us to generosity in as many ways as we see God's love unfurl.

**The Offertory - Keith Konet**

**\*Presentation of Offerings - Doxology**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

**\*Blessing of the Gifts**

**Holy One, we thank you for revealing yourself to us in ways both big and small,  
in ways miraculous and mundane. Use our gifts to further your loving justice in our communities  
near and far. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People**

**The Lord's Prayer (using "debts" and "debtors")**

**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 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.**

**GOING FORTH**

**\*Parting Hymn - NCH 420 - We Praise You, O God**

**We Praise You, O God**

Author: Julia C Cory, 1902; alt.

Tune: KREMSER 12.11.12.11.

Source: Valerius, Nederlandtsch Gedenkclanck,, 1626

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**1 We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;  
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.  
We lay it before you, we kneel and adore you;  
we bless your holy name, glad praises we sing.**



**2 We worship you, God of our mothers and fathers;  
through life's storm and tempest our guide you have been.  
When perils o'ertake us, you never forsake us,  
and with your help, O Lord, in life's struggles we win.**

**3 With voices united our praises we offer,  
and gladly our song of thanksgiving we raise.  
Our sins now confessing, we pray for your blessing;  
to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise!**

**\*Commissioning and Benediction**

One: We will go into the world as God's people,

**All: telling of God's hopes for all.**

One: We will go to serve the world as followers of Jesus,

**All: showing with our lives that all are part of the kingdom.**

One: We will go to share the Spirit,

**All: to bring peace where there is war, to share love where there is hate. Amen.**

**\*Postlude - Keith Konet**

\* \* \* \* \*

**Credits**

- (1) The Call to Worship, Invocation, Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings and the Blessing of the Gift, are adapted from *For Faith: Service Prayers for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost*, written by Dr. Sherry Warren, who serves as Minister of Women's and Gender Justice for the National Ministries of the UCC. She loves to garden and grow things. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.
- (2) The Prayer of Response is adapted from - *Worship Resources for August 13th, 2023*, written by Rev. Mindi Welton Thomas, and posted August 4th on her blog, *Rev-o-lution*. <http://revo-olution.org/>
- (3) Commissioning and Benediction is adapted from from *Alternate Liturgy and Communion from August 13th, 2023 (Pentecost 11/Trinity 10/Proper 14/Ordinary 19-A)*, written by Thom M. Shuman, and posted August 6th, 2023, on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (4) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-736636. All rights reserved.

**Ministers, All of Us  
Scott Rosenstein, Pastor  
Keith Konet, Council President  
Beverly Wurm, Administrative Assistant**



## NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### **God is Still Speaking...**

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

**Tithes and Offerings** - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and placed in the offering basket or mailed to:

**Zion United Church of Christ  
c/o Keith Konet  
1039 Bridlewood Drive  
Copley, OH 44321**

Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

### **Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm**

Beverly began a part-time position with us. She is keeping some limited Office Hours at church (2700 W. 14<sup>th</sup>) /home. The days and hours are:

#### **New Summer Schedule :**

Tuesday– 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2 pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

Beverly can be reached at: [zionchurchtremont@gmail.com](mailto:zionchurchtremont@gmail.com) or by phone at: 216-273-7561 (church) or 216-310-6810 (mobile).



## Season after Pentecost A, Part 1 (Year A, June 4 – August 27, 2023) Embracing the Kin-dom: 2023

“As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” (John 17:18 CEB)

The longest season of the liturgical calendar are filled with Sundays called “Ordinary Time.” It begins with Trinity Sunday and ends with the Reign of Christ. We move from concentrating on the event of Christ in the world and shift to the impact of being in Christ in the world. A life in the unity of the Trinity is one of being shaped and sent daily in the image and in the purpose of Holy Love.

### Help for Ukraine

Gifts made to UCC Ukraine Emergency Appeal will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people.

Donate online with the link below:  
<https://tinyurl.com/yc6aesk4>

Or designate a check for Ukraine Relief and mail to:

United Church of Christ,  
P.O. Box 71957  
Cleveland, OH 44194.



Gifts made to Sharing America’s Resources Abroad (S.A.R.A) provide food, clothing, and sanitary items for refugees fleeing to Hungary.

Donate online with the link: <https://shorturl.at/efijp>

Or designate a check for S.A.R.A. - Donations for Ukraine Emergency Fund and mail to:

SARA  
c/o Heartland Conference UCC  
P.O. Box 1230  
Worthington, OH 43085.

**Please know that your gifts of any size make a difference in this critical time.**

## Responding to Wildfires on the Hawaiian Islands



**From David K. Popham, Conference Minister,  
Hawai'i Conference, United Church of Christ :**

“No doubt, like me, you watched in horror the newscasts and read news stories as the fires spread across Maui and Hawai'i Island. Most heartrending, at this time, are the images of Lahaina on fire. Due to limited phone access, we are still seeking firm information regarding people and church properties directly affected.

We do know the following limited information: Waiola Church fellowship hall burned in the fire, we do not have word on their sanctuary. We know the Campbell House and adjacent park were also in the path of the Lahaina fire. We have heard that many church members are affected by the evacuation orders, but we do not know the status of their homes at this time. On Hawai'i Island we know that access to some churches were blocked by fires. Six fatalities [*as of August 11, 2023 – 55 fatalities*] have been reported so far.

In these times we want to be of help and assistance to our 'ohana in distress. Offerings and collections taken through your local church can be sent to the Conference Office where we will work to distribute the funds to devastated areas and those in need. Individuals may also donate online directly through the Conference's Hawai'i 2023 Wildfires Relief Fund (part of the Conference's general "Hawai'i Disaster Relief Fund," which is also accessible via our website at [hucc.org/donate](https://hucc.org/donate).)”

**Donate to  
Hawaii Conference United Church of Christ  
Hawai'i 2023 Wildfires Relief Fund**

**Donate Online with Credit or Debit Card: <https://shorturl.at/rFUVO>**

### **Please Remember in Prayer**

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation - federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community,
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.

- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For children separated from their parents at detention camps along our southern border.
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption.
- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and the United States.
- The people of Turkey and Syria: more than 50,000 people have died following two devastating earthquakes. Hopes of finding people alive have dimmed and experts fear the toll could rise sharply. Turkish authorities say some 13.5 million people have been affected in an area spanning roughly 280 miles from Adana in the west to Diyarbakir in the east, and 186 miles from Malatya in the north to Hatay in the south. At least 44,374 deaths have been reported in Turkey, while 5,800 951 people have died in Syria. Be with all who grieve and mourn the loss of loved ones, homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Please help the survivors to process and move through the trauma, and to rebuild their lives and communities.
- We pray as well for the people of Vermont, upstate New York, and the Canadian province of Nova Scotia affected by catastrophic flooding. Be with all who grieve and mourn the loss of homes, businesses, and infrastructure. Please help the survivors to process and move through the trauma, and to rebuild their lives and communities.
- Residents of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, the SE United States and Florida experiencing many days of very high temperatures and heat.
- In early August 2023, a series of wildfires broke out in the U.S. state of Hawaii. Affecting the island of Maui, and to a lesser extent Hawai'i (also known as the Big Island), the wind-driven fires prompted evacuations, caused widespread damage, and killed at least 55 people in the town of Lahaina. The proliferation of the wildfires was attributed to dry, gusty conditions created by a strong high-pressure area north of Hawaii and Hurricane Dora to the south. By August 9, the state government of Hawaii issued a state of emergency for the entirety of the state. On August 10, President Biden issued a federal major disaster declaration. The typical area burned by wildfires in Hawaii has increased in recent decades, almost quadrupling. Experts blame the increase on the spread of non-native vegetation and hotter, drier weather.
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive a total of 430 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of August 9th, 2023. In 2022 a total of 648 mass shootings. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incident occurred across the US, in 2020 a total of 611, in 2019 a total of 417, with 337 incidents in 2018. While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit – and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States - We know that our words and prayers are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.
- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the omicron variant and various variant surges: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home

- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.
- Those on our church prayer list:
  - Patti Augustine (health concerns) and family. Patti's brother Dave is recovering from recent open-heart surgery.
  - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) is residing at Mapleridge Senior Living Willoughby, oh. Robert recently celebrated his 91<sup>st</sup> Birthday.
  - Betty Funk (*our Minister of Music*) *Betty passed from us on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.* We give thanks to God for Betty's Christian faith and evangelism, her friendship and hospitality, her music ministry as musician and choir director. We commend her spirit to God's eternal being. Our sympathy and condolences to her family and loved ones, her longtime partner, Keith Konet and her friends.
  - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob; friend of Elaine – health concerns*)
  - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara Reed, Nancy Moore's sister has passed away.
  - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet - *prayers for recovery.*
  - Keith Konet and family.
  - Marcia Leslie (*neighbor and friend – health concerns*)
  - The family and loved ones of Elaine Lukacs.
  - Patricia Matheny and family (*including prayers for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray*).
  - Barbara Rossington *Prayers for Barb's cousin, Robert, for tests and procedures.*
  - Henry Senyak (*May 17, 1963-August 9, 2023 - resident community leader*) – *In loving memory – died following a battle with cancer.*
  - Debbie Webb (*continued prayers*)
  - Beverly Wurm (*prayers for family*)

## Cleveland-based United Church of Christ elects first woman as leader

*Cleveland.com - Updated: Jul. 03, 2023, 11:26 a.m. | Published: Jul. 03, 2023, 11:12 a.m.*

By Molly Walsh | [mwalsh@cleveland.com](mailto:mwalsh@cleveland.com)

CLEVELAND, Ohio – The United Church of Christ has elected the **Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson** as the first woman to lead the denomination as General Minister and President.

The General Synod, the governing body of the church that is based in Cleveland, voted Monday to elect Thompson during its 34th annual gathering in Indianapolis with 626 delegates voting for her election, 43 against and seven abstaining. Thompson is also the first Black woman to lead the church.

Thompson is a Jamaican immigrant and is the third person of African descent to serve as leader of the denomination. She is the third woman nominated for the post, but she is the first to be elected.

“Today, United Church of Christ, we created a first together,” she said after the vote. “It won’t be the last first.”

She will start her new role Aug. 1, taking over from the Rev. John Dorhauer, who has served for the past eight years.

Thompson has served in the National Setting of the United Church of Christ since 2009 as minister for racial justice and minister for ecumenical and interfaith relations. Prior to joining the national staff, she was on staff for UCC's Florida Conference, as a church planter in Florida and in family ministries in New York.

Thompson holds a doctorate in ministry, with a dissertation in religious multiplicity among African Caribbean people, from Seattle University; a master's of divinity from Union Theological Seminary; and a master's of public administration from North Carolina Central University.

"As I stand here before you as your newly and duly elected general minister and president, I stand here as a Jamaican immigrant woman, a mother and a grandmother, a sister and a friend to many," Thompson said in a statement released through the church. "The enormity of this moment will be with me for many years to come."

Also see: *Karen Georgia Thompson becomes first woman to lead UCC in historic vote – United Church of Christ website: <https://tinyurl.com/mu6r4ux9>*



*The United Church of Christ has elected the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson as the first woman to lead the denomination as General Minister and President*

# ARTS IN AUGUST 2023

## IN TREMONT'S LINCOLN PARK

bring a blanket or a chair!

**AUGUST 5TH 7pm**

**CLEVELAND PUBLIC THEATRE'S STEP**

**AUGUST 6TH 4pm**

**CLEVELAND SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL**

**AUGUST 10TH 7pm**

**REFLECTIONS DANCE THEATER**

**MOJUBA DANCE COLLECTIVE**

**SHRI KALAA MANDIR - CENTER  
FOR INDIAN PERFORMING ARTS**

**AUGUST 11TH 7pm**

**INLET DANCE THEATRE**

**AUGUST 12TH 7pm**

**VERB: OHIO CONTEMPORARY BALLET**

DANCE RAIN DATE : AUGUST 13TH 7PM

**AUGUST 18TH 7pm**

**THE CHURCH OF STARRY WISDOM**

**CREATING LEWIS WITH  
EMERGENCE ENSEMBLE**

**AUGUST 25TH 7pm**

**PAPO RUIZ Y LA DULZURA DE LA SALSA**

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