

Together we celebrate the work of God's Spirit among us through Christian fellowship and service throughout our community, practicing a welcoming spirit, honoring each person, and challenging one another to seek God's purpose in the world – with the promise of joy, renewal, and spiritual growth.

(Mission Statement, adopted 1996)

HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH

Chartered in 1874 in the Free Church Tradition
American Baptist/United Church of Christ
5600 South Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60637
phone 773.363.6063 • fax 773.324.3874
www.hpuc.org • office@hpuc.org



May 2017

May Church Calendar

Regular Weekly Events:

Wednesdays - Bible Study in the Senior Minister's Office, 9:00 a.m., **except 5/24**

Thursdays - Senior Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 3

Worship & Music Committee Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, May 5

Taizé Worship, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 7

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Worship with Communion, Rev. Ashley Whitaker preaching, 10:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour & Fellowship, 11:30 a.m.

Installation Service of Rev. Ashley Whitaker, 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, May 9

Missions & Social Concerns Committee Meeting, 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 11

Christian Education Committee Meeting, 5:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 14

Fifth Sunday of Easter Mother's Day

Worship, Rev. Ashley Whitaker preaching, 10:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour & Fellowship, 11:30 a.m.

Second Hour: Letter-writing & Advocacy, 11:30 a.m.

Gilead Auxiliary Mother's Day Layette Assembly for Jackson Park Hospital, 12:00 p.m.

There is no Chili-making in May.

Wednesday, May 17

Property & Finance Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 21

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Worship, Rev. Ashley Whitaker preaching, 10:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour & Fellowship, 11:30 a.m.

Church Board Meeting, 12:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 28

Ascension Sunday

Worship, Rev. Erma Croom preaching, 10:00 a.m.

Coffee Hour & Fellowship, 11:30 a.m.

Monday, May 29

Memorial Day Church Office Closed

Tuesday, May 30

June Newsletter Submissions Due by 12:00 p.m.

Pastor's Column Rev. Ashley Whitaker

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Amen.

...well, now what? Early April brought with it palms, Communion, darkness, crucifixion, grief, waiting, and finally, the glory and joy of Easter resurrection. Now, as we enter May, how should we, as a church, focus our time of worship together? Fortunately, the Revised Common Lectionary (an ecumenical, three-year cycle of texts for Sunday morning worship and preaching) offers several options for preachers and congregations to consider as we seek to answer the question, "Well, now what?"

As the Discipleship Ministries of The United Methodist Church says, "In North American culture, Easter is one day. In the church's reckoning of time, it lasts for fifty days! The resurrection of our Lord is so significant that the Revised Common Lectionary and calendar of the Christian year gives nearly one-sixth of the year to pondering and praising God in light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ among the disciples and in the world. In classic Christianity, the time after Easter was for 'unpacking' what had happened at Easter, particularly at the initiation of men, women, and children in baptism, anointing and the laying on of hands, and Eucharist."²

Between now and Pentecost (the day in which we commemorate the birth of the Christian Church) on June 4th, we will be following a miniature built-in sermon series from the Revised Common Lectionary through the book of The Acts of the Apostles (also known simply as Acts). In particular, we will be looking at the power of the Holy Spirit in community, in witness, and in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ, our Resurrected Lord.

As James White says, "It is perplexing why modern Christians concentrate on Lent, the season of sorrow, rather than on Easter, the season of joy. Augustine tells us, 'These days after the Lord's resurrection form a period, not of labor, but of peace and joy. That is why there is no fasting and we pray standing, which is a sign of resurrection. This practice is observed at the altar on all Sundays, and the Alleluia is sung, to indicate that our future occupation is to be no other than the praise of God.' The resurrection was and is commemorated by a day each week—Sunday; a festival each year—Easter Day; and a season—the Easter Season. There can be no doubt about the centrality of the resurrection in the life and faith of the early church."³

I hope that this focus on Acts and the early church will help us, as Hyde Park Union Church, learn more about how the early church was, often, not so very different from our own times. They, too, faced challenges of both the spiritual and practical realities of faith. And, in their lives as in ours, the Holy Spirit was quite active and powerful in a wide variety of ways.

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In light of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and as we stand in the heritage of the disciples throughout the ages, may we, too, experience a revitalization of our Christian discipleship and a fresh inflowing of the Holy Spirit into our lives of faith as Hyde Park Union Church.

Blessings,
Pastor Ashley

¹ <http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/preaching-and-worship-for-the-sundays-of-easter-year-c>

² <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/the-great-fifty-days-of-easter-series-overview>

May Happenings for Gilead Ministry: Blessings, Babies, and Goodbyes **Rev. Erma Croom, Director of the Gilead Ministry**

The arrival of the month of May brings a mixture of excitement and sadness for Gilead Ministry at Jackson Park Hospital. The excitement comes as we plan for our participation in Jackson Park Hospital's Nurses week celebration which takes place between May 6th and May 12th. Gilead Ministry will participate in the celebration by providing a "Blessing of Hands" ceremony as part of the kick-off for the week long observance. As we anoint the hands of each nurse our prayer will be, "Bless these hands and make them instruments of healing." After the opening ceremony the chaplains will visit each unit in the hospital and offer the blessing of hands. Gilead Ministry chaplains are grateful for the opportunity to participate in the celebration honoring the nurses at Jackson Park Hospital.

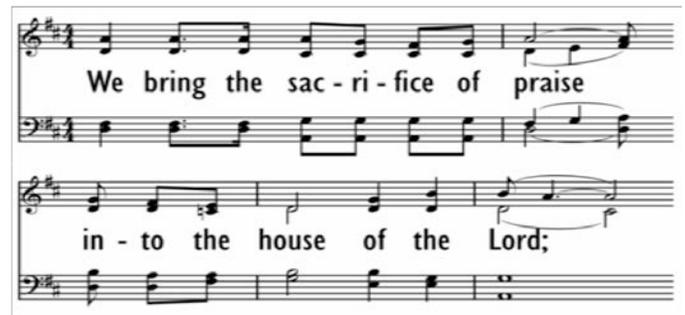
The excitement continues with the annual Mother's Day Layette Assembly event on Sunday, May 14th. Mother's Day at Hyde Park Union Church is not only a day to recognize mothers and motherhood, it is also a day when members of the Gilead Auxiliary and other volunteers gather in the social hall after the 10 a.m. worship service to assemble layettes for new mothers at Jackson Park Hospital. The layettes contain items for new babies such as blankets, onesies, hats, sleepers, diapers, socks, and wipes. The new mothers at Jackson Park Hospital are always grateful for the layettes they receive. Those wanting to support this effort may bring their donations to the church on or before Sunday, May 14th.

The month of May also brings a touch of sadness because the staff at Gilead Ministry will say goodbye to our interns from McCormick Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago Divinity School. Our partnership with local seminaries and Urban CPE affords students an opportunity to experience pastoral ministry within a hospital context. Some of the students plan to pursue chaplaincy as a vocation, others are leaning more toward the academy, and others are still in the process of discerning the specifics of their call. This diverse group of men and women brought the richness of their life experiences, knowledge, and skills to serve the patients, family members, and staff of Jackson Park Hospital. It has been a delight to work with the students and I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to their ministry formation.

Thank You, Choir! **Jade Maze, Music Director**

I wanted to offer a simple word of thanks to our choirs, both senior and children's. The last day of service for the year will be on Sunday, June 18th. Please know what an integral part of the worship service you are! The might of your ministry has been felt, no matter what size. You've earned your rest, so enjoy your summer months of rejuvenation. God willing, we will strengthen our numbers in the fall. It will be nice to have voices help us with the sacrifice of praising God.

The command in Hebrews 13:15 says that this sacrifice is to be offered "continually." Our praise of God is not to be based on our opinion of His job performance. Praise cannot be treated as a "reward" we give God for His obvious blessings. Isaiah 29:13 says, "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." Real praise continues regardless of circumstances. It flows continually from a worshiping heart in good times and bad (Acts 16:23-25).



The "sacrifice of praise" comes from a humble heart that has been purified by fire. It rises from a spirit that has chosen to honor God in spite of the pain that life is causing.

So, indeed, thank you, Choir for your service. May God bless you!

Update from Missions & Social Concerns **Margaret O'Dell, Chair**

The Missions and Social Concerns Committee facilitates Hyde Park Union Church's engagement with our community in ways that express our faith and our values. With the active participation of our committed members and others in the congregation, the Committee has several updates to report this spring.

- **Letter writing continues monthly during coffee hour.** We are pleased that there has been so much support and welcome any ideas or issues members of the congregation might want to propose.

In March we wrote to Illinois senators Dick Durbin and Tammy Duckworth and congressional representatives Bobby Rush and Robin Kelly, urging them to take action against executive orders coming out of the White House that are unfriendly to refugees and asylum seekers looking to our country



Installation

You are invited to join the congregation of Hyde Park Union Church in celebrating the installation of Rev. Ashley Whitaker as Senior Minister.

The Service of Installation will be held on Sunday, May 7th, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. A reception will follow in the Social Hall.

This day of celebration will begin with Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m., including the observance of The Lord's Supper, which is always open to all. All are welcome in worship!

Please join us for this this very special celebration in the life of Hyde Park Union Church!

Save THE Water

Upcoming Youth & Family Events

Youth and All Family Canoe Trip

Join us at the Ned Brown / Busse Woods Forest Preserve for a day of canoeing and picnicking on **Saturday, June 3rd**. Canoes, along with sandwiches, snacks, and beverages will be provided. We will leave Hyde Park Union Church at 9:30, canoe and picnic between 10:30 and 3:30, then head home to arrive around 4:30, depending on traffic. All are welcome, including friends. Kids in 6th grade or below should be accompanied by a parent. Teenagers and their friends are definitely welcome. Wear a swimsuit. Please give a headcount to Youth Leader Tim J. Smith. \$35 per person donation to Hyde Park Union Church, Memo: Youth Canoe, requested.

Youth Camping and Meditation Trip

Join us for a youth camping trip to Mississippi Palisades State Park. We leave Hyde Park Union Church at 4:00 PM on **Friday, 23 June** to return on Sunday at 10 AM, just in time for church. All food, cooking equipment, and tents will be provide. You just need to bring your toothbrush and a sleeping bag (plus clothes, swimsuit, and other travel toiletries.) 6th through 12th grade are welcome, including their friends. Expect to go hiking, play soccer, through a Frisbee, or otherwise enjoy yourself. Please give a headcount and food restrictions to Youth Leader Tim J. Smith. \$40 per person donation to Hyde Park Union Church, Memo: Youth Camping, requested.



Please contact Tim Smith at tsmith@wiglafpricing.com to RSVP.

for refuge and support. In April, we wrote to state officials Mike Madigan, Barbara Flynn Currie, and Kwame Raoul, urging them to act to reform civil asset forfeiture practices. Several of those who wrote letters have received a reply from Currie, saying that she agrees that civil asset forfeiture must be reformed.

- **Special offerings support organizations in the community.** In December, on Christmas Eve, we collected an offering for the Syrian Refugee Project in Hyde Park, which is now being coordinated by the Hyde Park-Kenwood Interfaith Council. In April, the offering was dedicated to St. Martin de Porres House of Hope, a shelter for abused women and children in Woodlawn. Our congregation has had a longstanding relationship with St. Martin de Porres; we regularly provide back-to-school backpacks filled with school supplies in September (thanks to the leadership of Lynn Bergero) and a food offering on Thanksgiving Sunday. A recent Chicago Sun-Times article reported that the shelter has fallen on hard financial times.
- **Chili making continues on a Summer schedule.** Once a month, our congregation gathers in the kitchen during coffee hour to prepare chili for the Open Kitchen at Kenwood UCC, a soup kitchen in Kenwood that serves an average of 70 people per day. Because several regular chili cooks and Rev. Leroy Sanders of Kenwood UCC will be away on May 7, chili making will not occur in May. It will take place on June 11 and July 9.
- **Hyde Park Refugee Project.** Ginni Cook is attending regular meetings of the Hyde Park Refugee Project as a representative of HPUC. She reports that the committee is trying to create procedures to enable the two founders hand off some tasks to others. A website almost done, and a fundraising letter is being prepared and will go out next week to help support ongoing needs for two families now in Hyde Park. Ginni is the treasurer.

Good progress is being made with education and tutoring. All the kids are in school or equivalent, though language and lack of previous formal education and literacy are barriers. Mentors/tutors are doing well; most are from the University and Lab School. A training program called Literacy Works is available, and Ginni is taking a course, on how to teach people who are illiterate in their native language. There will be a course here in the summer in basic ESL, and the committee has raised some funds for advanced ESL training.

Upcoming needs include: winter clothing drive, fundraising, more volunteer training in the fall. The website will make it easier for potential volunteers to participate. Bringing the project under the

umbrella of Hyde Park-Kenwood Interfaith Council also makes contributions tax deductible.

- **Children’s books and reading for moms at Cook County Jail.** Thanks to Pastor Wesley Sun’s role at Cook County Jail, we have an opportunity to supply children’s books for mothers who are incarcerated there. The project would involve providing a book both to the mother and to her child, and to record her reading it, so the child can have the book at home and hear it in her voice. We have developed a short list of books, and Pastors Wesley and Ashley are figuring out the process for getting the jail to let us create a permanent library there for moms to access.
- **Vegetable boxes on the South Side of the church building.** We are working with Christian Ed to create vegetable boxes where children can grow a few simple vegetables such as lettuce and tomatoes, which they can then donate to the Food Pantry.

We welcome any ideas and expressions of interest in these projects, which are only a few of the many ways we as a church can serve our community.

Please don't forget to bring your layette; supply donations to the church on or before Sunday, May 14, 2017.

The following items would be very much appreciated:

- blankets
- onesies
- hats
- sleepers
- Pampers (size 1)
- wipes
- bibs
- socks

Monetary donations should be addressed to Hyde Park Union Church with: "Layettes" written on the memo line for checks or indicated on the envelope for cash.



**Just a
reminder...**

Please remember to keep your belongings with you at all times while you are in the church building.



Experience the Sacred
through Song and Silence in the Spirit of

Taizé

Friday, May 5th, 7:00pm
New Growth...

 Hyde Park
Union Church 5600 S Woodlawn | hpuc.org 

Join us every first Friday of the month for Taizé

Hyde Park Union Church
5600 S. Woodlawn Ave.
Chicago, IL 60637