

North Haven Congregational Church

United Church of Christ



(Georgia O'Keeffe, Abstraction Blue, 1927)

North Haven, Connecticut

An Open & Affirming Congregation

FOUNDED 1716

**NORTH HAVEN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Sunday, September 20, 2026

9:30 a.m.

* = Please stand in body or in spirit.

PRELUDE

“Prelude in A Minor”

Lemmens

CHORAL INTROIT

“Listen to Your Children Praying”

Chancel Choir

(Text: Ken Medema)

Lord, listen to your children praying.

Lord, send your Spirit in this place.

*Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.*

WELCOME

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: May the Living God, the source of life and love, be with you!

C: And also with you.

L: Friends, this is Christian worship!

**C: Which means it is a celebration of God’s love for all,
and a training center for living as disciples of Jesus
Christ today.**

L: The indwelling and enlivening Spirit has brought us together,

All: So let us worship God!

***OPENING HYMN** “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty”

VU 31

CALL TO, AND PRAYER OF, RENEWAL

All: Merciful God, we confess that we have often not followed the direction of love, and thus have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and guide what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS & THE CANDLE OF PEACE

***GREETING OF PEACE**

L: The peace of Christ be with you!

C: And also with you!

L: Please share the peace of the Living Christ with others, with one saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and the other responding, "And also with you."

***THE 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.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Jonas Yong Solberg, child of Linda Du & Henry Solberg
Ida Amelia Fox, child of Walker Fox & Muriel Solberg-Fox

Words from Scripture & Introduction

Affirmation of Faith

All: We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, whom Jesus called "Abba," Father, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of

life and death. God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of justice declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Source.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory. God promises to all who trust in the gospel, forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

The Parents' Baptismal Promises

Congregational Promises

All: Jonas and Ida, relying on the grace given to us in our own baptisms, and on behalf of the church universal, we pledge that we will love, encourage & support you, share the good news of the gospel with you, and help you know & follow Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Thanksgiving Over the Water
Act of Baptism
Prayer of Baptism
Presentation to the Congregation
Sign of the Cross

***MUTUAL BLESSING WITH CHILDREN**

Congregation: God be with you there.

Children: And God be with you here.

THE GIFT OF MUSIC “Lord of All Hopefulness”

Chancel Choir

Text: Jan Struther, 1931

Tune: Trad. Irish melody, Slane;
arr. Martin Shaw

PRAYER FOR OPENNESS AND UNDERSTANDING

**All: God of truth and light, fill our hearts and guide our
steps by the ancient and holy words we are about to hear.
May we all, preacher and congregation, be open to your
Word, with all its challenge and comfort, its call upon us
and its enlivening Spirit in us. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS Exodus 16:2-18 Victor Maldonado
Matthew 20:1-16 Mike Solberg

SERMON “Magnificent Foolishness” Mike Solberg

***HYMN** “Lift High the Cross” VU 151

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass 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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

THE OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY**

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

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: Gracious and loving God, we make our offering to you now, not because we need to earn your approval, but because we know that such sharing connects us more deeply to you. It even teaches us to see Jesus at the center of our lives, and lets us share in your magnificent foolishness. May we, like all the faithful, be known for loosely holding what we have, ready to let it go for the work of repair, and for the spreading of your love and good news to all. Amen.

***CLOSING** “God, We Pray at This Beginning” VU 443

***BAPTISMAL BENEDICTION** “May God Who Creates You”
VU 454

POSTLUDE “Prelude 21” J.S. Bach

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The deacon/liturgist is Sandy Carter.

The scripture reader is Victor Maldonado.

The greeter is Nancy Mahoney.

The flowers are given in loving memory of Nancy Mahoney's mom, Muriel Tiedemann, celebrating her first heavenly birthday on September 23rd. You are missed every day, especially by dad. We treasure all our wonderful memories.

The camera operator is Damon Quinn.

Join us for fellowship in Carroll Hall following worship!

Church staff: All the Members, Ministers for the World

Donna Carpenter, Office Administrator

Karlee Etter, Ministry Coordinator for Children

Brianne Goldfuss, Nursery Attendant

Jeffrey Hutchins, Director of Music

Heather Meachen, Organist

Dave Nelson, Sexton

The Reverend Mike Solberg, Interim Minister

In our prayers this week are: Merrilee Gladkosky, Sue Tibor, Lee Guckert, Melanie Howlett, Marlene Bellonio (for 5 years since the death of her husband, David), Meg Adams, Charlotte Shea, Paula Diehl and for Lori Perillo (Heather Tolisano's mother).

BIRTHDAYS: Patience Benassi, 9/23 & Jennifer Coulston, 9/23.

ANNIVERSARY: Rhonda & John Masnato, 9/21.

RUN THE LIVESTREAM CAMERA ON SUNDAY MORNING!

The livestream of our worship service is very important to church members who live far away or cannot attend in-person. The camera operator controls the camera in the church office, shifting the camera angle to provide close-ups at various points in the

service. It's a pretty simple process to set up the camera and the livestream, and it's lots of FUN! This is a good way to get high school community service credits! Just ask Sue Cifelli, or Kaitlyn or Damon Quinn, or Joan Bennett! We're looking for volunteers! Please speak with Jeff Hutchins.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS:

Cans of Beans (Baked, Kidney, Black), Cans of Broth, Cans of Fruit, Jars or Peanut Butter and Jelly, Jars of Gravy, Mayonnaise, Boxes of Rice, Boxes of Cake Mix/Brownie Mix, boxes of Cereal, Boxes of Pasta, Coffee, Tea, Pamalat Milk, and Juice.

BY POPULAR DEMAND (well, if roughly two people make it "popular", lol): Did you know that full written copies of Mike's sermons are available in the Narthex? Copies are available starting with the last Sunday, and going back about two months. Enjoy them for inspiration, faith development, or for a cure for insomnia. Also, remember that you can go back and watch video of our services (and skip around as you wish) on our YouTube channel, at <https://www.youtube.com/@northhavencongregationalch7775>

FAIR CRAFT WORKSHOP:

The next Fair Craft Workshop will be September 22nd at 1:30 p.m. in the Koinonia room. Helpers needed to work on simple assembly of crafts for the November 7th Harvest Fair. A simple painting project is planned for this week. All are welcome, helping hands needed. Carol Mitchell and Cathy Welch

ADULT CHRISTIAN FORMATION WITH REV. MIKE:

Starting on Sunday, September 27, Rev. Mike will be leading a class following worship, starting with a six-week series on the Lord's Prayer - but you've likely never heard the Lord's Prayer like this before! We often take the Lord's Prayer for granted, saying it by rote, but not really considering what we are actually praying, and what it meant when Jesus first taught the prayer to his disciples. The class will be each Sunday from 10:45 - 11:45, and each week will "stand alone," so don't worry if you can't make every week. See, or email, Rev. Mike with any questions.

IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY (non-church events):

"Honor Them with a Flag" is a fundraiser to benefit the American Legion Post 76. It is a way to salute to our country's military personnel, veterans and first responders, among others. All are invited to participate by purchasing a U.S. flag dedicated to a member of the military, first responder, or anyone else close to your heart. A ceremony honoring veterans and first responders has been scheduled for Sunday, November 8, at 12:00 p.m. on the North Haven Town Green. All are welcome to participate in this ceremony. The flags are \$10 each and the deadline for purchases is Wednesday, October 21, 2026. Please email snm1986@yahoo.com or call 203-430-0411 for more information.

**The October *Window* Deadline
is Wednesday, September 23.**



Have you signed up for the UCC Daily Devotionals? Here's an example, from last Wednesday. You can receive them everyday in your email inbox. Sign up here: <https://www.ucc.org/daily-devotional/>

Debating Dumpster Fires

by [Tony Coleman](#) | published on Sep 16, 2026

In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be comforted. – Psalm 77:2

“Refuses” is a hard word in this psalm. It transforms the lament into a subtle confession. It suggests that there are times when comfort lags, perhaps, because we’re resisting it.

These days I’m finding myself in a strange sort of argument. On one side are the “realists,” folks who are certain that the world is a dumpster fire that will keep on burning until there’s nothing left. And, they insist, there’s nothing that we can do about it. On the other side are the “optimists,” those who see the fire but forecast it differently. We see places where there’s more air than smoke, places that haven’t yet been set aflame, even places where the fire can’t reach.

What makes these exchanges arguments is that the “realists” (those I know, anyway) will not relent. For every fact the optimists offer, the realists counter with two more that point back to the fire. In judgmental moments, I think, “Would you rather be right than hopeful? Don’t you realize that ‘hope’ isn’t some opiate of the uninformed masses but is, rather, a sustenance as dear as food?”

Then, I read Psalm 77, and I am reminded that this is a really old argument, one people have had with each other—and themselves—for millennia. I am reminded of the times I have looked at the world or a relationship or a dream and thought, “Well, this is broken, and no one can convince me otherwise.” In that place, others’ words of consolation or encouragement feel like a denial of reality, a dismissal of deep pain. In such moments, Psalm 77 invites us to go soul-deep, though, and ask: Am I refusing comfort? Is some part of me resisting hope?

Prayer

God who appears in fires, help me stretch out my hand and grab hold of Your comfort.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday	9/20	9:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 2:30	WORSHIP (In-Person/Live Stream) Tibetan American (K, CR) Al-Anon Leader Mtg.
Monday	9/21	9:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 6:00	Music Together FOOD PANTRY CT Record Club (CH)
Tuesday	9/22	9:30 a.m. 10:00 10:30 12:00 p.m. 1:30 6:00	Music Together (DBL) Al-Anon (K) Music Together(DBL) PLP (Parking lot or CH) Fair Craft Workshop (K) Bible Study (Zoom)
Wednesday	9/23	9:30 a.m. 10:00 10:30 1:00 p.m. 7:00	WINDOW DEADLINE Music Together FOOD PANTRY OPEN Music Together Danish Sisterhood (K & Kitch.) Al-Anon District Family (K)
Thursday	9/24	7:00 p.m.	Chancel Choir
Friday	9/25	10:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m.	FOOD PANTRY OPEN Sons & Daughters of Italy
Saturday	9/26	8:00 a.m. 8:00 9:30	Son's & Daughters of Italy (CH) Music Together (DBL) Music Together (DBL)
Sunday	9/27	9:30 a.m. 10:45 1:00 p.m.	WORSHIP (In-Person/Live Stream) Adult Christian Formation Tibetan American (RR,CR)

MISSION

Our church's mission is to bind ourselves with Jesus Christ in:

- *Worship together;*
- *Nurture of Christian discipleship; and*
- *Compassionate service to our community and beyond.*

VISION

We are a hub for the larger community as a church of action:

- *Conducting regular, robust worship in a responsible and relevant way in an ever changing and challenging world;*
- *Welcoming all people from different and diverse backgrounds to become a community of disciples together; and*
- *Involved in purposeful action and activities through the structure of self-directed Mission Teams.*

VALUES

We:

- *Pray together, encourage each other, and trust one another;*
- *Take personal responsibility for fellowship and our community; and*
- *Celebrate with honored traditions.*