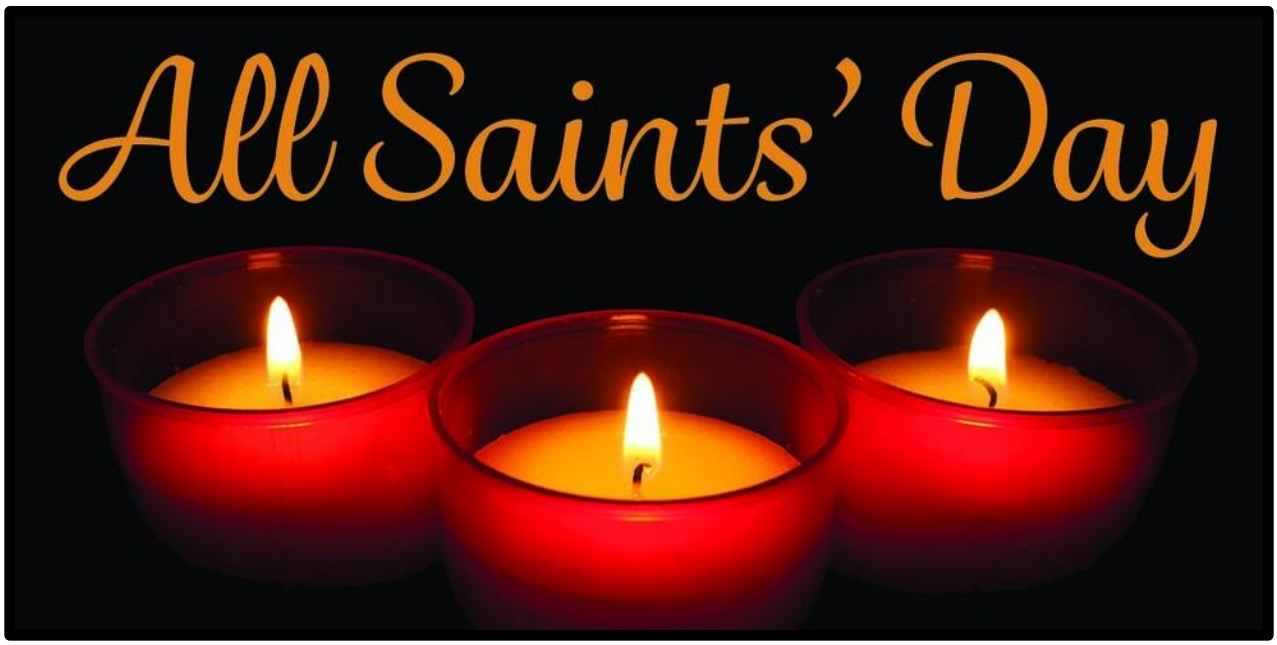


Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ

4704 13th Street NW
Washington, DC 20011

Sunday, November 1, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

Rev. Paul Robeson Ford
Senior Minister-Elect

Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds
Interim Minister

Love God and Love Neighbor

ENTER TO WORSHIP . . .

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

All Saints' Day

Sunday, November 1, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

The Liturgical Color is Green*

CENTERING THOUGHTS

"Our ancestors knew that the 'lamp of faith' was not just for personal comfort, but a searchlight for justice. To honor the saints is to remember not only those who reached the Promised Land, but also those who perished in the wilderness of human cruelty—in the middle passage, on the auction block, and at the borders of our own time. We trim our lamps today so that no child of God remains in the shadows of a cage or the darkness of a detention center. We wait, we watch, and we work, for the Light of Christ knows no borders."

— Adapted from the spirit of the Afro-Christian Tradition and the UCC call to Extravagant Welcome.

PRELUDE

Holy Lamb (How I Love the Holy Lamb)

****PROCESSIONAL/OPENING HYMN** ***No. 339 AAHH William W. How/ Ralph Vaughan Williams

For All the Saints

Verse 1 **ALL**, Verse 2 **WOMEN**, Verse 3 **MEN**, Verse 4 and 5 **ALL**

PASTORAL OBSERVATIONS AND WELCOME Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds

****CALL TO WORSHIP** Minister Geneva Hudson

Leader: We gather this morning on holy ground, joining our voices with the great cloud of witnesses who have gone before us. From the banks of the rivers in Africa to the shores of this land, we remember the saints who paved the way with prayer, sweat, and song.

People: We remember our ancestors—the known and the unknown—whose faith is the foundation upon which we stand. Their light continues to guide us.

Leader: On this All Saints Sunday, our hearts are also heavy with the names we do not know, but whose cries reach the ears of the Almighty. We remember our brothers and sisters who have perished in the shadows of the border, those who died at the hands of ICE agents, and those whose breath was stolen within the walls of immigrant detention.

People: We pray for the "least of these" who sought refuge and found a cross. We honor their dignity and demand God's justice.

Leader: In the spirit of Matthew 25, we trim our lamps. We refuse to let the oil of our compassion run dry. We remain awake, watching for the light of Christ to break through the darkness of oppression and xenophobia.

People: We are ready for renewal! We are ready for the light of a new day!

Leader: Come to the Table of Grace, where there are no borders and no walls. Here, the ancestors eat with the exiles, and the saints dine with the seekers.

ALL: Let us worship God in Spirit and in Truth. Let us share the Holy Meal. Let us remember, let us hope, and let us rise! Amen.

****INVOCATION** Minister Geneva Hudson

Holy and Eternal God, Creator of every tribe and every tongue, we invoke Your presence in this sanctuary today. You are the God of the Exodus and the God of the Exile, the one who hears the cry of the oppressed and gathers the weary under Your wings. We thank You for the ancestors of this African American tradition—those who found freedom in Your Word even when shackled by the world. We thank You for the saints of the United Church of Christ who have labored for justice and peace. Lord, we invite Your Spirit to hover over the memories of those who have died in the shadows—those lost in detention centers and those whose lives were cut short by the hands of authority at our borders. Do not let their names be forgotten; let their spirits rest in Your eternal embrace and let their blood cry out for a more just and merciful world. As we prepare to receive Holy Communion, trim the wicks of our hearts. Fill our lamps with the oil of readiness, that we might be a people of renewal and light in a dark season. Speak through Rev. Bragg-Reynolds, lift us through the music of Peoples Congregational Choir, and knit us together as one Body at Your Table. Come, Holy Spirit, and transform us. In the name of Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest and the Refuge for all, we pray. Amen.

MUSICAL SELECTION Traditional

Thuma Mina

****AFFIRMATION** Deacon Carrie Tyus

We are not alone; we live in God's world. We believe in God, who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to live with respect in Creation, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, and in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 78:1-7 Deacon Malcolm Carpenter
1Thessalonians 4:13-18 Deacon Kenneth Parker
Matthew 25:1-13

****COVENANT** Minister Geneva Hudson

We are united in striving to know the will of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our purpose to walk in the ways of God, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church of Jesus Christ to proclaim the Gospel to all humankind, exalting the worship of the one true God and laboring for the progress of knowledge, the promotion of justice, the reign of peace, and the realization of the beloved community. Depending, as did our fathers and mothers, upon the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth, we work and pray for the transformation of the world into the City of God. We look with faith for the triumph of righteousness and the life everlasting.

****GLORIA PATRI** Saint Hilary of Poitiers

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

SONG OF PREPARATION ***No. 281 AAHH Nolan Williams/ William Gaither

Because He Lives

SERMON Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds

"READINESS FOR RENEWAL AND LIGHT"

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP Minister Geneva Hudson

HYMN ***No. 281 AAHH Bernard of Clairvaux

O Sacred Head Surrounded

†††

HONORING THE SAINTS Bernice Ramey

THE LITURGY OF HOLY COMMUNION
A Celebration of All Saints and the Hope of the Dispossessed

The Invitation

Leader: Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! In the United Church of Christ, we say that no matter who you are or where you are on life'journey, you are welcome at this table. Today, the table is spread long and wide. It stretches back to the ancestors who whispered prayers in hush harbors. It stretches out to the detention centers and the borderlands, reaching those who hunger for bread and for home. It is a table without borders, a table of sanctuary, a table of light.

The Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Lift up your hearts.

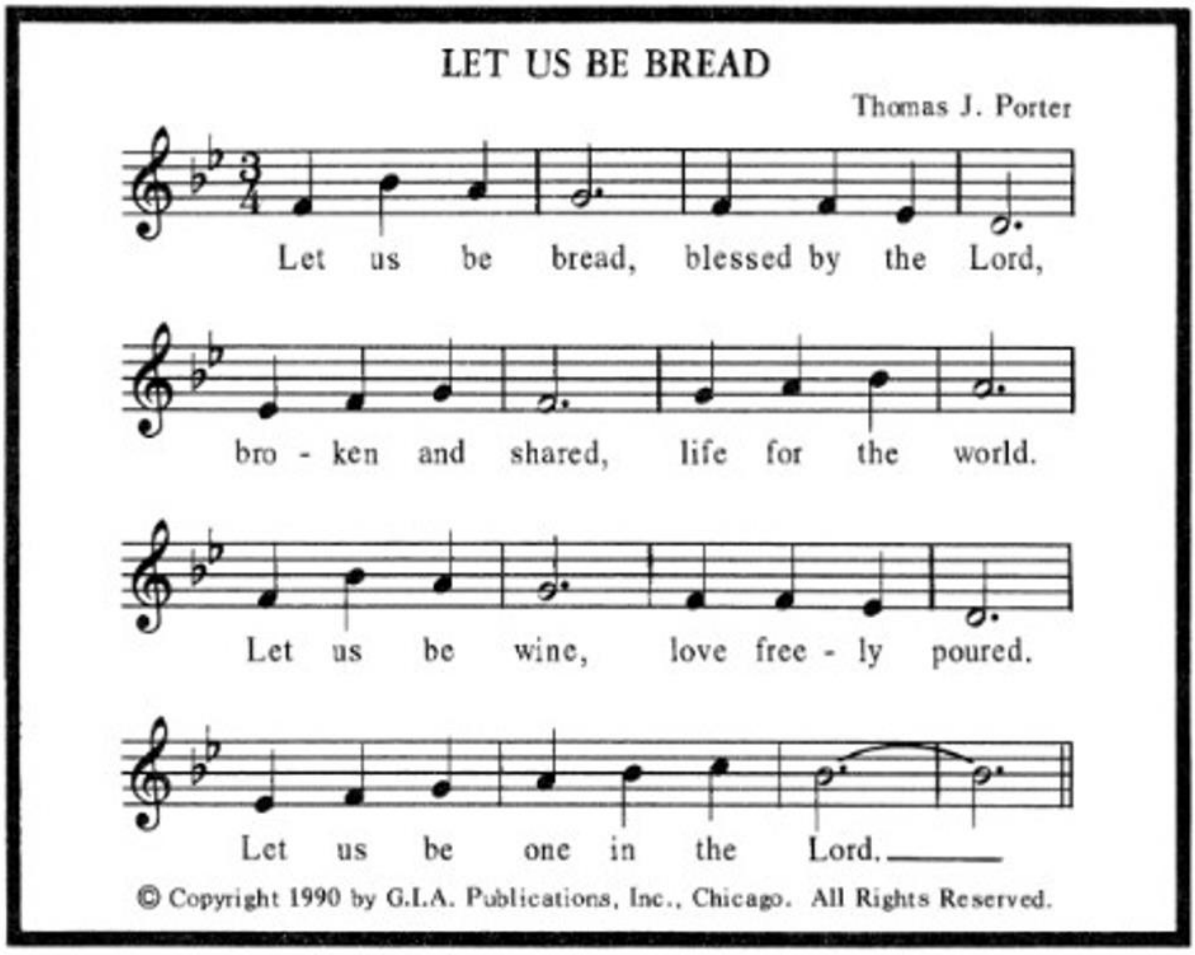
People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: It is right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to You, God of our weary years and silent tears. We praise You for the saints who finished the race, and we weep with You for those whose race was cut short by the cruelty of systems, by the coldness of cages, and by the violence of borders. We remember those who died seeking a better life, only to find a premature grave in immigrant custody. We hold them in the light of Your grace, knowing that in Your kingdom, every wall is torn down. Therefore, with the ancestors, the martyrs, the exiles, and all the company of heaven, we join the unending hymn:

ALL: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.



The Words of Institution

The Prayer of Consecration

The Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer After Communion

ALL: Eternal God, we thank You for the nourishment of this table. We have tasted Your goodness and remembered the ancestors. We have carried the sorrows of the border to Your feet. Now, send us out with our lamps trimmed and burning. Let us be the light that exposes injustice and the hands that build Your sanctuary on earth. Amen.

†††

OFFERTORY Minister Geneva Hudson

OFFERTORY SELECTION Andre Crouch

It Will Never Lose Its Power

OFFERTORY PRAYER Minister Geneva Hudson

****DOXOLOGY** William Walsham How

We give Thee but Thine Own
What e'er the gift may be;
All that we have is Thine alone
A trust, O Lord, from Thee. Amen

****CLOSING HYMN** ***No. 264 AAHH Isaac Watts/
Ralph E. Hudson

At the Cross

****BENEDICTION** Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds

POSTLUDE Andre Crouch

God Is on Our Side

…DEPART TO SERVE

Dr. Robert L. Jefferson, Director of Worship and Peoples Congregational Choir
Minister Diedre D. Gray, Assistant Director of Worship and Peoples Praise

Minister Geneva Hudson, Minister of Congregational Care
Minister Francis Smith, Minister of Community Engagement
Rev. Dr. Helga Baskett-Tippett, Minister of Faith Formation
Rev. George Walker, Ministerial Team

***The communion table is draped in white for Holy Communion**
****All who are able, please stand**
*****AAHH African American Heritage Hymnal**

REALM REGISTRATION

Scan the QR Code: Peoples Realm
Sign-Up, Sign-in, or Make a Donation

PEOPLES PREACHING, WORSHIP LEADER, AND BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE

NOVEMBER 2026 **Sermon-Talk-Back – Corbin Lounge*

Sunday, November 1, 10:00 am (Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost) *

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

"Readiness for Renewal and Light" Psalm 78:1-7; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds, *Preaching*

Minister Geneva Hudson, *Worship Leader*

Thursday, November 5, 6:00 pm (Bible Study)

"Preparing for a New Season in the Transition of Ministry"

Psalm 78:1-7; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13

Sunday, November 8, 10:00 am (Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost)

CHILDREN'S SABBATH

THEME*: "The Future is Listening. Are We?"*

Celebrating Children's Voices and Advancing Literacy Equity

Proverbs 31:8-9; Mark 10:13-16

Ashley Iman, *Featured Speaker*

Children's Author and Educational Leader

Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds, *Worship Leader*

Thursday, November 12, 6:00 pm (Bible Study)

"Advocating for the youngest and the 'silenced' in our midst"

Psalm 98; Isaiah 65:17-25

Sunday, November 15, 10:00 am (Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost)

A SERVICE OF FAREWELL

"The Cost of Discipleship" Psalm 107:1-9; Exodus 3:1-12; Matthew 4:18-22

Rev. Benjamin Ledell Bragg-Reynolds, *Preaching*

Sunday, November 22, 10:00 am (Reign of Christ)

Rev. Paul Robeson Ford, *Preaching*

Sunday, November 29, 10:00 am (First Sunday of Advent)

Rev. Paul Robeson Ford, *Preaching*

Significance of “Senior Minister-Elect” in the United Church of Christ

In the United Church of Christ (UCC), the title “Senior Minister-Elect” is not a separate rank or permanent office, but a temporary designation used when a congregation has chosen its next settled minister but has not yet formally installed them.

What “Senior Minister-Elect” Means

The term “elect” comes from the idea of “chosen for office but not yet installed.” In UCC practice, this title marks the transition period between the congregation’s decision to call a minister and the official installation service; it is not an additional role, but a way to identify the person who will become the Senior Minister once installed. The designation ends after the Installation service, when the person is referred to as “Senior Minister.”

Significance in UCC Polity

The UCC Constitution and Bylaws require authorized ministry (ordination, commissioning, or licensure) for pastoral leadership. The “Senior Minister-Elect” designation confirms the minister’s authorization and identifies them as the chosen leader for the congregation’s future. It signals to the congregation and the wider church that the call has been made and the installation is imminent. Provides a formal, consistent way to communicate the person’s role during the interim, especially in public notices, programs, and church communications.

Practical Use

In UCC congregations, the “Senior Minister-Elect” title is often used:

- On installation program booklets and church websites.
- In public announcements and press releases.
- In search and call documents from the conference or association, to indicate the person’s status before installation.

In summary: The UCC designation “Senior Minister-Elect” is a temporary, ceremonial title that identifies the chosen future Senior Minister between the call and the installation, ensuring clarity, continuity, and recognition of the minister’s role in the congregation’s leadership.

SERMONIC NOTES

PEOPLES
CONGREGATIONAL
United Church of Christ