

Order of Service at the United Reformed Church
August 23, 2026 9:30 am
Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

APPROACHING GOD

Prelude Canon Peeters

Word for 2026: Practice.
People: *May we practice becoming.*

Salutation
Grace and peace from God the Father and Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Call to Worship
Jesus said, “A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me.”
We come trusting God even when we cannot see what comes next.
There are seasons when sorrow feels overwhelming and questions remain unanswered.
Still, we come believing sorrow does not have the final word.
Christ promises a joy that cannot be taken away and a peace the world cannot give.
So we gather with courage, hope, and faith.
In Christ, we are not abandoned.
In Christ, we have peace. Let us worship God.

*Opening Hymn (#98 Blue Book) Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Call to Confession
Jesus does not promise us a life without trouble. Instead, Christ meets us in the middle of it and invites us to live with courage. Yet there are times when fear becomes louder than faith, anxiety overwhelms hope, and we forget that God remains present even when we cannot see what God is doing. Trusting the One who already knows us completely, let us confess our sins together.

Prayer of Confession
Faithful God, we confess that we struggle when we cannot see what comes next.

We want certainty when you invite us to trust. We want immediate answers when you ask us to remain faithful. We allow fear to convince us that difficulty means you have left us, and disappointment to make us question whether hope is still possible. Forgive us when we surrender our peace to circumstances. Forgive us when fear determines how we live, when anxiety narrows our vision, and when we forget that sorrow is not the end of the story. Teach us to trust your presence in uncertain places. Give us courage for what we must face, faith for what we cannot yet see, and peace that remains even when life is difficult. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. (a moment for silent confession)

Words of Assurance
Hear the promise of Jesus Christ: “I have said this to you, so that in me you may have peace.” Christ does not tell us there will be no trouble. Christ tells us that trouble will not have the final word. Our sorrow can become joy. Our fear does not have to rule us. Our circumstances cannot separate us from the presence of God.
Jesus says, “Take courage; I have conquered the world.”
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Passing the Peace
The peace of Christ be with you! And also with you.

HEARING GOD’S WORD

Hymn of Preparation (#495 Blue Book) It Is Well With My Soul
**Please remain seating*
Prayer for Illumination
Scripture Reading John 16:16–33

The Word of God, for the People of God!
Thanks be to God!

Sermon

RESPONDING TO GOD

Offertory “We Give Thee But Thine Own” Schumann
(We give Thee but Thine own, whate’er the gift may be: all that we have is Thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from Thee.)

*Doxology Tune (Old Hundreth)
*Prayer of Dedication

*Affirmation of Faith
Prayers of The People and The Lord’s Prayer
Announcements

*Closing Hymn (#32 Blue Book) How Firm a Foundation
*Benediction

Postlude Diapason Movement (from a voluntary) Green

Our Invitation
Welcome to United Reformed Church! As we join together in prayer, song, and praise to God, we pray that the blessings and fellowship you find here will enrich your life. *If you are physically able, an asterisk (*) indicates an invitation to stand.* Bold text signifies opportunities for the congregation to read and respond responsively.
Pastor Office Hours: Wednesday 5-7 PM; Sunday 10:30 AM-12:30 PM
Church Office Hours: Mon, Tue, Thurs 9AM-2PM; Wed 3-7 PM

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Lillian Hines pastorlillianhines@gmail.com
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UNITED REFORMED CHURCH OF CLIFTON
SUNDAY WORSHIP
AUGUST 23, 2026