

Forgiveness and Light

August 16, 2026





Wilbraham United Church

*A Congregation of the United Church of Christ
and the United Methodist Church*

500 Main Street

Wilbraham MA 01095

Phone: (413)596-2511

www.wilbrahamunitedchurch.org

Facebook.com/WilbrahamUnitedChurch

August 16, 2026

12th Sunday after Pentecost

10:00AM

We ask that everyone wear nametags so that we can be welcoming to all. There are listening devices available for those that may need them. An usher will be happy to assist you. Following the service in the Sanctuary after worship, everyone is invited to a time of Fellowship in the Zeckhausen Room which is immediately across from the Sanctuary.

**All who are able to stand, may do so.*

UMH – The “red” United Methodist Hymnal

TFWS – The “small black” book Faith We Sing Hymnal

GATHERING MUSIC

Piano: Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

arr. L. Larson

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

WELCOME

Pastor Julie

***GATHERING HYMN #103 (UMH) verses 1 & 3**

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bob Mantler

Liturgist: Let us sing to the Most-High God,

People: who provides for us, and whom we worship in this place.

Liturgist: How awesome is our God,

People: who created from nothing all that is beautiful and holy and good;

Liturgist: who anticipates our every need;

People: who loves us beyond measure.

All: O God, our God, make your presence known. Hear our voices lifted up to you in praise!

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Gracious God, We greet you once more in this sacred space. We come, for we need reminding of your love and your expectations for our living. We are like the vines you planted, watered and protected. We know in our hearts that we need and want your presence in our every moment. And so, we come in prayer, to listen for your word to speak to our hearts, refresh our souls and restore us into health and new life. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE # 334 (UMH)

*There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,
And I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;
There are sweet expressions on each face,
And I know they feel the presence of the Lord.*

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 45:1-15

Then Joseph could no longer control himself before all those who stood by him, and he cried out, "Send everyone away from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. And he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it. Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. So it was not you who sent me here but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me; do not delay. You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. I will provide for you there, since there are five more years of famine to come, so that you and your household and all that you have will not come to poverty.' And now your eyes and the eyes of my brother Benjamin see that it is my own mouth that speaks to you. You must tell my father how greatly I am honored in Egypt and all that you have seen. Hurry and bring my father down here." Then he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept, while Benjamin wept upon his neck. And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

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.

Sung Response # 2193 (TFWS)

*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.*

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 15: 21-28

Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon." But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, "Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us." He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." He answered, "It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish." And her daughter was healed from that moment.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

Rise Above: The Art of Forgiveness

Pastor Julie

* **HYMN** – #548 (UMH) verses 1 - 3

In Christ There Is No East or West

OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS AND OURSELVES

Invitation to Give

Offertory

Prelude No. 3

J.S. Bach

***Doxology #94 (UMH)**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts. Praise Jesus Christ, whose power up lifts!
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit, Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***PARTING HYMN #133 (UMH) verses 1 & 3**

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

***FOLLOWING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD**

***BENEDICTION**

Response: We accept our mandate to forgive everyone. Let freedom through forgiveness ring!

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #664 (UMH), verse 2:**

*With praise and thanksgiving to God ever living,
the tasks of our everyday life we will face.
Our faith ever sharing, in love ever caring,
embracing God's children of each tribe and race.*

MUSIC FOR SENDING FORTH

Organ: *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*

arr. J.D. Payne

Welcome Visitors! *Is this your first visit to United Church? If you wish to be contacted by a member of the church or our pastor, please leave your contact information with one of the ushers or place a visitor card in the collection plate.*

The Altar flowers this morning are given by Poppy Nelson in loving memory of the first anniversary of Terry finding everlasting life.

MINISTERING TO YOU TODAY

Pastor: Rev. Julie Olmsted

Music Director: Roberta Morkin

Technical: Deb Trimble

Ushers: Ralph & Sherrie Ridgeway

Liturgist: Bob Mantler

Greeter: Joyce Emerle



Rev. Julie Olmsted: Pastor (pastor@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x 103
Bobbie Morkin: Music Director (musicdirector@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x106
Deb Trimble: Administrator (admin@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x100
David Wapner: Sexton (wucbuilding@wilbrahamunitedchurch.org) (413)596-2511 x107

If you are in need of Pastoral Care, please contact Rev. Julie or the Church Office.

After office hours, Rev. Julie can be reached at 937-409-1375 (until 8pm, unless it's urgent).

Please Pray For:



Catherine Gardner
Connie Law
Sharon McAbee
Shey McAbee
Michelle McBride
Bill McCullough
Claire McCullough
Ed McCorkindale
Jean Michon
Jim Trimble
The Hungry
The Homeless

The victims of violence and their families
Our troops, our country and our world

“News for the Pews” for the Week of August 16, 2026

There will be a **Church Council** Meeting on Monday, August 17th at 7pm in the Zeckhausen room. There will be a Trustees meeting (chairs of Administration, Finance and Physical Operations) at 6:30 pm. Agenda items should be forwarded to Victoria prior to the meeting.

Our **Loaves and Fishes** ministry is still in need of packaged cookies. If you are able to provide them they can be left in the kitchen in the storage bin marked Loaves and Fishes or left in the church office.

Getting ready for Back to school? Don't forget our **Shopping Card** program to help with your shopping! We've got more than just Big Y cards! Current inventory includes Amazon, Apple, Kohl's, LL Bean and Target! We've also got cards for popular fast food locations including Dominos, Subway, Jersey Mikes, Starbucks and Dunkin Donuts. Shopping cards make great additions to college care packages!

This Week at Wilbraham United Church

Sunday, August 16, 2026

10:00 a.m. – Worship

11:00 a.m. – Fellowship (ZR)

5:00 p.m. – Al-Anon (YR)

Monday, August 17, 2026

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

6:30 p.m. – Trustees (ZR)

7:00 p.m. – Church Council (ZR)

Tuesday, August 18, 2026

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

**11:30 a.m. – Women's Fellowship
(ZR)**

2:00 p.m. – Bible Study (ZR)

Wednesday, August 19, 2026

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

11:00 a.m. – Staff Meeting

Thursday, August 20, 2026

Church Office 8:30 – 1:30

9:20 a.m. – Loaves and Fishes

6:30 p.m. – Al Anon (YR)

Friday, August 21, 2026

Church Office closed

Saturday, August 22, 2026

Church Office closed

Sunday, August 23, 2026

10:00 a.m. – Worship

11:00 a.m. – Fellowship (ZR)

5:00 p.m. – Al-Anon (YR)