

May 3, 2026
Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year A
+ Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries Sunday
+ First Sunday in Asian American, Native Hawaiian
and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Do the Works

(rev. 3/11/26)

Acts 7:55-60, Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16, 1 Peter 2:2-10, **John 14:1-14**
for use by any UCC church on May 3, 2026

Possible/Suggested Worship Elements

Minister or Liturgist Welcome

Welcome to the worship service of _____ United Church of Christ. Today is the first Sunday in Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. And in the United Church of Christ, the first Sunday in May is designated as Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) Sunday in the UCC. So, this morning, in the spirit of both PAAM Sunday, we extend to you a modified version of our UCC words of welcome: “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey; no matter your ancestry or immigration status... YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!”

Passing of the Peace (inspired by John 14) written by Rev. Michaelraj Yesudhasan)

Beloved siblings in Christ, in the Gospel of John 14, Jesus says, “Do not let your hearts be troubled... Believe in God, believe also in me.”

To our PAAM Community, people of many islands, many nations, many languages, many stories, Jesus speaks peace into our journeys of migration, struggle, hope, and faith. He reminds us that He is the Way when we feel uncertain. He is the Truth when our voices are overlooked. He is the Life that sustains our families and our ministries.

Today, we share not just a greeting, but a covenant of solidarity to do Christ’s works in our churches, in our cultural communities, and in the wider world. Let us share the peace of Christ across generations, across cultures, across languages.

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Call to Worship (inspired by Psalm 31 and John 14) written by Rev. Charing Wei-Jen Chen

[Please edit as is useful for your congregation.]

Leader: Do not let your hearts be troubled. We believe in God; we believe also in Christ.

People: In you, O Lord, we seek refuge; be our rock of refuge and strong fortress.

Leader: For your name’s sake, lead us and guide us; draw us out from every hidden net.

People: Into your hands we commit our spirit; you have redeemed us, faithful God.

Leader: Our times are in your hands—our grief and hope, our questions and calling.

People: Let your face shine upon your servants; save us in your steadfast love.

Leader: In God’s house there are many dwelling places; a home is being prepared.

People: Make room in us for the One who comes near; make room among us for one another.

Leader: Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—our path when we feel lost.

People: Show us your way; shape us in your truth; breathe your life into us.

Leader: And Christ promises: those who trust him will do the works he does—and even greater.

People: By the Spirit's power, we will Do the Works—works of healing, justice, mercy, and joy.

Leader: From many cultures and communities, we praise God—and today we learn to pray in Taiwanese, widening our worldview through another sacred tongue:

People: 願主面光照阮 (Guān Chú ê bīn kng-chiò guán) — May the Lord's face shine upon us.

Leader: In Christ's name we pray, and God is glorified.

People: With faith and courage, we worship—and we will Do the Works.

Invocation (inspired by Psalm 31 and John 14) written by Rev. Charing Wei-Jen Chen
[Please edit as is useful for your congregation.]

Faithful God, Rock of refuge and tender Shelter,
we come to you on Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries Sunday,
in the first days of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month,
bringing the beauty and burdens of our many peoples.

Breathe your Spirit among us.
Settle your presence like morning light on the ocean,
like mist on the mountains,
like peace in a restless heart.

Jesus, Way-maker, speak again: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.”
Hold those who carry grief, displacement, racism, war memories, and family silence.
Strengthen those who are tired from doing good.
Awaken in us the promise of your word:
that those who believe will Do the Works—
works that mend what is broken, welcome the stranger,
tell the truth with love, and practice mercy with courage.

Holy One, we pray in the languages of home and longing:
主啊, 求祢帶領阮 (Chú ah, kiû Lí tuà-niá guán) (Taiwanese)* — Please lead us, O Lord.
主啊, 求祢光照阮路 (Chú ah, kiû Lí ê kng chiò guán ê lōo) (Taiwanese)*— Shine your light on our
path, O Lord.

Guide this worship: our singing, our silence, our prayers, our preaching, our offering.
Let your face shine upon your servants, and make us a living witness—
one church, many waters; one Spirit, many stories—
ready to Do the Works in your name.

Amen.

*Leader can use the appropriate languages in their contexts if desired.

Prayer of Confession (inspired by John 14 and 1 Peter 2) written by Kahu Josann Jenks
Holy One, our Rock and our Refuge, We confess that we have tried to build our lives on shifting ground. We
have forgotten that you are the firm foundation that holds us up when the world feels unstable.

We acknowledge that we have often been jagged volcanic rocks, sharp and unyielding, creating edges that
push others away instead of drawing them in. We have failed to be the steady stones that make your house a

place of safety and peace. In John 14, Jesus promises us a place in your dwelling, yet we have hesitated to "do the works" of compassion and justice that he set before us. We have chased our own ambitions and ignored the "greater works" of healing that our community requires.

Forgive us for the times we have been silent. Forgive us for when we have chosen to be heavy burdens rather than the foundation that supports the weak. Smooth our rough edges and reshape us into living stones, rooted in your truth and standing firm in your love.

Assurance of Forgiveness (inspired by John 14 and 1 Peter 2) written by Kahu Josann Jenks

The Word is true: Christ is the Chief Cornerstone. Even when we feel cracked or like a jagged remnant, he is the strength that fits us together and keeps the structure from falling.

Through the grace of Jesus Christ, the Way and the Truth, you are restored. The gaps in your spirit are filled with his peace. You are forgiven, you are loved, and you are commissioned now to go and "do the works" of love in every place. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer (inspired by John 14) written by Rev. Chad Tanaka Pack

God of love, gather us from near and far. Gather our hearts from east and west, from north and south, and from every corner of your creation. Unite us with all who pray this PAAM Sunday. Thank you for your divine love, which connects us with the ministries of Pacific Islander and Asian American faith communities.

God of light, guide us on the path of celebrating diversity. Help us create respectful spaces where we can learn from and with people of cultures different than our own. Give us the wisdom and humility needed to reject stereotypes and biases. Thank you for your divine light, the ultimate source of insight.

God of peace, strengthen us as we strive for a better world. Give us the courage to speak up against hatred and to speak out against violence. Protect from harm all whose lives are in danger because of their culture, language, or ethnicity. Thank you for your divine peace, rooted in the eternal hope of new life.

God of new life, awaken our hearts with your vision of love. Inspire us to dream boldly. Release us from doubts and fears that get in the way of our moving forward. Help us grieve the past. Empower us to do the works on the path ahead. May our works, enlivened by your Spirit, become a living reflection of your kingdom here on earth. May it be so for all of us! Amen.

Sermon Introduction (focus on John 14) written by Rev. Mitchell Young

"Do not let your hearts be troubled." These are the first words out of Jesus' mouth in our gospel reading today—a comforting, intimate promise spoken to disciples who were anxious, confused, and fearful of what the future held. Yet, within just a few verses, Jesus pivots from comfort to a challenge: "Whoever believes in me will do the works that I've been doing, and they will do greater things than these" (v. 12). "Do the works." It's a command that can feel overwhelming, especially when our hearts are already heavy with the troubles of this world.

For many of us in the Pacific Islander and Asian American communities, our history is one of living in troubled times—navigating displacement, overcoming racism, or witnessing the scars of environmental damage on our ancestral islands. We know what it means to live in "troubled times." Yet, we are not called to mere survival. We are not called to sit quietly in the room Jesus is preparing. We are called to *do the works*.

Today, on PAAM Sunday, we celebrate a vibrant, resilient, and faithful community that has always, in the face of uncertainty, done the work. We look to the faith of our ancestors, the strength of our diverse

languages and cultures, and the fierce love of a community that makes room at the table for all. "Do the works" means following Jesus' model of loving service, fighting for justice, and being the hands and feet of God right now, in this generation. It is a call to take the comfort of Jesus and turn it into the courage of action. So, church, let us explore together what it means to "do the works" in our homes, our communities, and our world today...

Holy Communion Liturgy written by Rev. Dr Yuki Schwartz

Holy Communion: In Remembering

(Inspired by a poem written by Jonah Chang, revised and edited by Kay Sakaguishi, and read during the National Conference of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United Church of Christ, April 1974. From The Theologies of Asian American and Pacific Peoples, compiled by Roy I. Sano, edited by Daniel D. Lee, Claremont Press, 2022).

Introduction

We come to this table as pilgrims readying ourselves for a trip across vast waters. Like Jesus before us, we take nourishment in the form of bread and juice or wine, but also through the companionship and care we give to and receive from one another. With this meal, we set sail with Jesus into the waters of death and the breaking waves of resurrection into new life. As a fellowship of wanderers, we do the work together to keep one another safe from harm until we find rest in a world transformed by God's love.

Invitation to Communion

One: Lord, we remember and we praise you ...

All: When we, like your disciples, journey across the soil and sands of your good Earth, bring news of your compassion not only through many dialects and tongues, but in the actions we take to do the works of our God who is love ...

One: Lord, we remember and we praise you ...

All: When we, like the women who first proclaimed your miracles, raise our voices and stretch out our arms to one another as we fight against the systems that attempt to keep us quiet and still ...

One: Lord, we remember and we praise you ...

All: When we, like the communities of your followers, who first defied the unjust laws of the empire that oppressed them, in order to dare to love one another regardless of nationality, identity, status, and language.

All: We thank you, O Lord, for the ancestors who came before us who turned dreams into discipline and hope into hearts filled with courage. Let us join them in this holy meal that makes them, and you, present among us.

Great Thanksgiving

One: May God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to our God who dwells with us when we do God's work of justice and love in this good world.

All: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

All: So be it! See to it!

One: Just as it takes many hands to sow and harvest the grains that make this meal that we eat.

All: It takes all of us to feed this world.

One: Just as it takes many hands to plant and pluck the fruits whose juice fills the cup that quenches our thirst.

All: It takes all of us to tend to the needs of this world.

One: Just as it takes many hands to build this place that has become our church home.

All: It takes all of us to shelter our neighbors from the dangers that surround us.

Words of Institution

Let us remember that on the night when one of his own beloved friends believed the lies of the empire and turned him over to the state for execution, Jesus took a loaf of bread into his hands. He blessed it, broke it, and shared it with his friends and said, "Take, eat: This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

And in the same way after the supper, Jesus took the cup, and after giving thanks, gave it to his beloved community, and said, "Drink this, all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, of justice, of compassion, of love, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Prayer after Communion

Holy God, grant us the steadfastness of the people who made this journey across the oceans during uncertain times, holding onto your promise that you would be with them. As we venture forth into a world of scarcity and betrayal, help us be your hope for the world. When any one of us feels the sting of injustice, when the forces of evil exile seek to tear our communities apart and exile our children into physical and spiritual deserts, move us to join them in their suffering instead of seeking cheap and comfortable grace. Be with us as we do your work to liberate the world from all that separates us from one another, and You. In the name of Jesus our Christ we pray, Amen.

Call to Offering (inspired by 1 Peter 2) written by Rev. Mitchell Young

Now is the time in our worship service when we rather shamelessly invite you give money to the church. This morning's epistle reading says: "'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.'" (1 Peter 2:6) Did you know that in 1993, our dear United Church of Christ founded the UCC Cornerstone Fund as a non-profit organization that provides low-cost, no-fee loans to churches and faith-based organizations for projects like renovations, repairs, and community impact initiatives? Naming the organization the "Cornerstone Fund" acknowledges Christ as the cornerstone and the fund's role as a foundation for ministry and community development.



Stone Wall built by Samoan Masons

However, long before that, and for PAAM Sunday, we also see the invitation: "Come to [Christ], a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood..." (1 Peter 2:4-5a), We are called to be built up into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, like the sturdy, volcanic rock walls of Tonga (*'ā maka*) and Hawaii (*pā*

pōhaku) forming strong foundations that were built with intentionality, strength, and community labor. In the Pacific tradition, every stone matters, and every stone connects. Our gifts today, build a community that reflects God’s marvelous light, bridging faith with solid action. Let us bring our gifts to build a structure of love and justice.

Prayer of Dedication (inspired by 1 Peter 2) written by Rev. Mitchell Young



Volcanic Rock Wall in Honolulu

Holy Builder, Cornerstone of our faith, we come before you not as strangers, but as your chosen people—living stones being built into a spiritual house. As our ancestors in the Pacific shaped stone on stone to create enduring walls that protected, gathered, and stood the test of time, we dedicate these gifts to build up your realm today. Bless these offerings, that they may act as a spiritual foundation—a cornerstone for our ministry, our missions, and our commitment to justice. May our gifts be used to secure our spiritual house, allowing us to rise as a chosen people, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, living, loving, and serving to proclaim your marvelous light. We offer these gifts, and ourselves, to do the works of God in the name of the true cornerstone, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dedication of Gifts (Short Version) (1 Peter 2, John 14) written by Rev. Mitchell Young

Living God, you are the foundation upon which we stand. As these gifts are gathered, we pray they become the spiritual mortar and stone that strengthens our community. Like the ancient *pā pōhaku* rock walls of Hawaii and the Polynesian *paepae* stone foundations of Tonga, Samoa, Tahiti, and Marquesas Islands, may our resources build a structure that endures in faith and love. We dedicate these gifts to do the works of Christ Jesus. Amen.

Benediction (inspired by John 14) written by Rev. Michaelraj Yesudhason)

Beloved PAAM family, as you go forth, do not let your hearts be troubled. The God who guided our ancestors across oceans guides us still.

Go and **do the works** of Christ:

Lift up the marginalized.

Encourage the weary.

Mentor the young.

Honor the elders.

Celebrate the beauty of our diverse cultures as gifts from God.

May the Holy Spirit empower your ministries,

Strengthen your families and deepen your unity as one body in Christ.

And may the blessing of God be upon the PAAM Community, now and always. Amen.

You may include this brief description of PAAM in your worship materials space providing:

Pacific Islander & Asian American Ministries



Pacific Islander & Asian American Ministries (PAAM) was organized in 1974 at a gathering in San Francisco, California, of representatives from different regions throughout the United States. The vision was to unite and move forward at the national, regional, and local levels as Pacific Islanders & Asian Americans in the United Church of Christ, sharing our unique gifts with one another.

PAAM was voted into existence at the 10th General Synod, in 1975, as a recognized Special Interest Group within the UCC. The 17th General Synod adopted the pronouncement, “A United Church of Christ ministry with Pacific Islanders & Asian Americans” calling to establish an implementation committee to make requests about the ministries of the PAAM churches. The 18th General Synod passed a resolution designating the last Sunday of April as PAAM Sunday when all UCC churches recognize and celebrate the gifts and contributions of Pacific Islanders & Asian Americans in the life of the UCC. In 2024, the UCC Board of Directors approved PAAM’s request to change PAAM Sunday to the first Sunday of May to coincide with Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month in the United States.

PAAM has initiated, sponsored, supported and participated in many activities at all levels of the UCC, worked for greater PAAM representation on all levels of the conference boards, committees, and staff. PAAM continues to address institutional racism within the church and society, is concerned with issues of human rights and justice, and helps to support and strengthen clergy and lay leadership at the local level.

Possible/Suggested music selections

Suggested by Music Directors of Live Oak UCC, Los Angeles Filipino American UCC, and Montebello Plymouth Congregational UCC

Suggestions from the New Century Hymnal:

5 Praise to God - Tune: Sakura, a traditional Japanese melody

11 Bring Many Names Consider adding verses celebrating our many names for God in our languages.

33 God Created Heaven and Earth - Taiwanese hymn

48 Jesus Christ Says - Urdu melody

72 Sekai no Tomo - Japanese tune

234 I'll Shout the Name of Christ Who Lives - Filipino Folk Melody

317 Mikotoba o kudasai - Japanese tune

333 O Bread of Life - Chinese hymn

395 In Christ There Is No East or West

424 Praise Our God Above - Chinese hymn

470 Golden Breaks the Dawn - Chinese tune

591 This Is My Song

615 Enter in the Realm of God - Filipino Folk Melody

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette hymns:

- [O God of Creation, We See Around Us.](#)

- [For This Land in All Its Wonder](#)

- [O God, Who Formed Creation](#)

Suggested anthem: "How Great Thou Art" (Themes in common with John 14 include: promise of a future home, comfort in troubled times, Jesus as the way to God, doing greater works in response to God's greatness.)

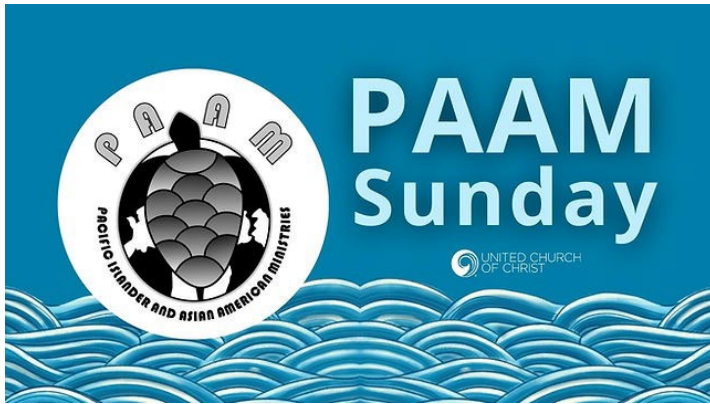
You also have permission to use "Listen to the Wind" written by Ron Kobayashi and Jessica Cosley for the consecration of Live Oak UCC in 2025.



Listen to the Wind
250217 LOUCC.pdf

Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church (MPCC) multilingual wishes for "A Just World for All" in languages of MPCC and Jesus Reigns Victoriously Church (JRVC): <https://youtu.be/2Duyeq1bdkk>

Artwork for slides:



Border strip:



A PAAM Sea Honu (Sea Turtle):



Do the Works, Liturgical Resources for the Fifth Sunday of Easter Year A, PAAM Sunday, was edited by the Rev. Mitchell Young, Vice-Moderator of PAAM. If you need an Asian/Pacific clergy stole, contact Rev. Mitchell Young at mpccucc@yahoo.com. Mahalo nui loa to this year's writers and contributors:

Rev. Charing Wei-Jen Chen, Chicago-based minister and co-host of 神/上帝的酷兒 (Queer of God), the first Mandarin-language podcast offering queer readings and commentary on the Bible.

Jessica Cosley, Music Director at Live Oak UCC in Brea, California.

Loida Gonzales, Music Director of Montebello Plymouth Congregational UCC in Los Angeles.

Kahu Josann Jenks, Kahu Pono (licensed minister) authorized by the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC) UCC.

Ron Kobayashi, Music Director at Live Oak UCC in Brea, California.

Rev. Dr. Yuki Schwartz, the Acting Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Acting Dean of the Faculty, and Associate Professor of Constructive Theologies, Spirituality, and Decolonial Studies, Claremont School of Theology.

Rev. Chad Tanaka Pack Associate Conference Minister for Building the Future, Southern California Nevada Conference UCC.

Jonathan Zari Music Director of Los Angeles Filipino American UCC.

Rev. Michaelraj Yesudhasan, Pastor of the Bowne Street Community Church (UCC/RCA) in Flushing, New York.

Rev. Mitchell Young, Senior Pastor of Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church in California. See how God is still speaking in Montebello at www.montebelloucc.org