



NEWTOWN United Methodist Church

September 20, 2026 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Rooted in Faith. Growing in Christ. Serving with Love.

Welcome and Announcements

*Gathering Hymn “This Is My Song” UMH #437
(Verses 1 & 3)

*Call to Worship

Leader: God, lead us from fear toward faith, from division toward understanding.

People: Shape our hearts with the peace of Christ.

Leader: Give us strength to speak truth without hatred and courage to seek peace without surrendering what is right.

People: Teach us to become peacemakers in our homes, our communities, and our world.

Leader: Come, let us worship the One who is our peace and calls us to build peace together.

People: May peace begin within us and move through us into the world. Amen.

*Opening Hymn “O God of Every Nation” UMH #435
(Verses 1, 3, & 4)

*Opening Prayer

God of peace, in a world filled with conflict, fear, and division, form in us the courage of Christ. Soften whatever hardens our hearts, strengthen us to pursue what is right, and teach us to disagree without losing

compassion for one another. May Your peace shape our thoughts, our words, and our relationships, so that through us others may experience something of Your healing and hope. Make us not simply lovers of peace, but peacemakers. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

*Affirmation of Faith The Prayer of Saint Francis UMH #481

Epistle Reading Romans 12:17–21 Pew Bible pg. 162

Choral Anthem “God Is Love” C.V. Taylor

*Gospel Reading Matthew 5:1–12 Pew Bible pg. 4

Message “Strong Enough to Make Peace” Pastor R. Brailsford

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer (*unison*)

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.

*Hymn “For the Healing of the Nations” UMH #428
(Verses 1, 2, & 4)

*Passing of the Peace

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

*Response Doxology, UMH #95

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

*Offertory Prayer

*Closing Hymn

“Let There Be Peace on Earth”

UMH #431

*Dismissal and Blessing

Postlude

*Please Stand if able

A Day Devoted to Strengthening the Ideals of Peace

The International Day of Peace was established in 1981 by Resolution 36/37 of the United Nations General Assembly. It is a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. To further enhance this mission, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 55/282 in 2001, establishing September 21 as an annual day of non-violence and cease-fire. It is also a global call to action, inviting communities to become peacebuilders, resolving conflict, promoting justice, and fostering understanding. This year's 2025 theme, “Act Now for a Peaceful World,” reminds us that peace is not passive, it requires courage, commitment, and collective effort.

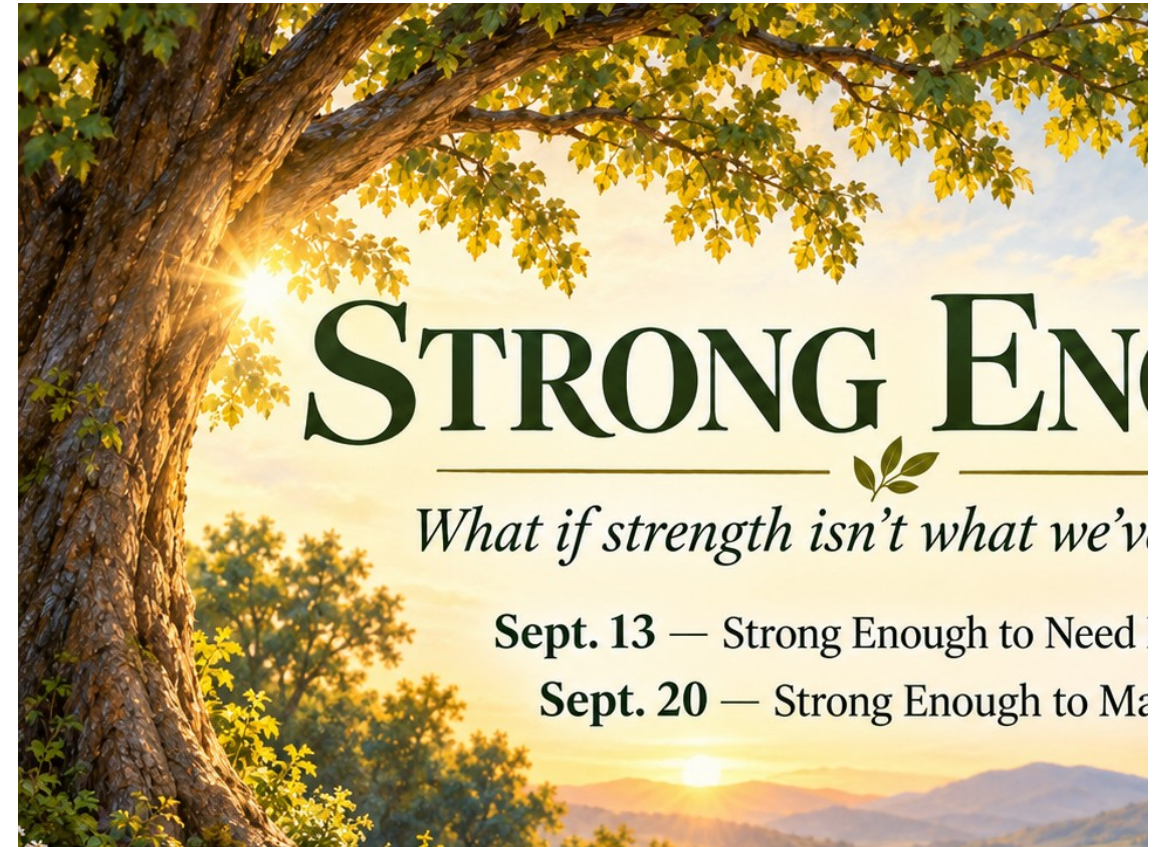
At Newtown United Methodist Church, the spirit of this day has deep meaning. In 2008, a number of members of this congregation participated in a thirteen-week study entitled *Living the Questions*. As a result of that study, we erected the Peace Pole, which stands at the foot of our driveway and proclaims: “*May Peace Prevail on Earth*” in a number of languages. We have celebrated the International Day of Peace many times since.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God.” — *Matthew 5:9*

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Peace Sunday

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