


December 2014




Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 6:30 Spiritually Fit	2 12am Golden Times 6pm Cherub Choir 6:30 Junior/Middler 7pm Bible Study 7:30 High School Choir	3 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:30 Spiritually Fit 7pm Church & Ministry; Book Club	4 7pm Chime Choir; Christian Ed	5 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study	6
8 6:30 Spiritually Fit 7pm Evangelism	9 9am Staff Mtg 10am Program Staff 10am Helping Hands 6pm Cherub Choir 6:30 Junior/Middler 7pm Bible Study 7:30 High School Choir	10 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:30 Spiritually Fit	11 7pm Chime Choir; Helping Hearts	12 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Cookies Youth Group & CIA	13
15 6:30 Spiritually Fit 7pm Consistory	16 9am Staff Mtg 10am Program Staff 6pm Cherub Choir 6:30 Junior/Middler 7pm Bible Study 7:30 High School Choir	17 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:30 Spiritually Fit	18 7pm Chime Choir	19 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study	20
22 6:30 Spiritually Fit	23 6-8pm Youth Choirs 7pm Bible Study	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 5pm Family Worship 8pm Communion & Candlelight 11pm Communion & Candlelight	25 CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED CHRISTMAS DAY	26 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30 am Bible Study	27 4:30pm SMA Rehearsal
29 6:30 Spiritually Fit	30 9am Newsletter 6-8pm Youth Choirs 7pm Bible Study	31 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:30 Spiritually Fit			

SUNDAYS


7 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Horizon Choir Confirmation Class	8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Horizon Choir Confirmation Class Tech Committee	21 Lessons and Carols 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Horizon Choir Confirmation Class	28 Young Adults 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Horizon Choir Confirmation Class
10:30am Horizon Service Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds Advent Brunch 4pm Scrapbookers	10:30am Horizon Service Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds Youth Group Advisory Team 7pm Parkland Chorale	10:30am Horizon Service Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds	10:30am Horizon Service/ Church Family Worship 11:30am Holy Grounds



▶ CHILDREN'S NEW 4




▶ YOUTH GROUP 5



▶ WOMEN'S RETREAT.....8

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Union
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
Neffs, Pennsylvania

HONORING THE PAST * CELEBRATING THE PRESENT

NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR

- 

Sunday, December 7th 8am and 10:30am Worship
Guest Musicians: Christmas Music with The Pennsylvania Guitar Quintet
 Frank Flandorffer, Tom Mondschein, Sean Bach, Heath Hitchcock, and our own Mike Baer
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Sunday, December 14th 8am and 10:30am
Adult Choir Musical: *Breath of Heaven*
 A heartfelt combination of treasured carols, classic inspirational songs, sing-along medleys, scripture, and narration for a musical celebration of the season.
- 

Sunday, December 14th at 7pm
Parkland High School Chorale and Women's Ensemble Concert
 Enjoy a lovely evening of music in our beautifully decorated church. It's free, donations accepted.
- 

Sunday, December 21st 8am and 10:30am Worship
Lessons and Carols and Wonderful, Extra Special Music
- 

Wednesday, December 24th, Christmas Eve
 5pm *Arrest These Merry Gentlemen*: A Christmas musical led by our Children and Youth Choirs
 Special music, Carols and Candlelight
 8pm Special music, Carols, Candlelight and Holy Communion
 11pm Special music, Carols, Candlelight and Holy Communion
- 

December 28 8am and 10:30am Worship
College Student and Young Adults and Sunday Morning Alive Team at 10:30



Star-Giving by Ann Weems

What I'd really like to give you for Christmas is a star...

Brilliance in a package, something you could keep in the pocket of your jeans or in the pocket of your being.

Something to take out in times of darkness, something that would never snuff out or tarnish, something you could hold in your hand, something that would remind you of what Christmas has always meant:

God's Advent Light into the darkness of this world.

We hope to see you in worship this month and to give you a star to light your way.

A Blessed Advent, a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you from the Pastors and Church Staff

From the Interim Pastor

Initial Reflections

After my first few days of ministry here at Neffs I have a few initial reflections to share with you. First of all, I appreciate the warm welcome I am receiving from all of you. Pastor Kris, Pastor Patience, and Kathy Bonsell have been very supportive in guiding me through these early days. The office staff, Tara Henninger and Barbara Carinci, have been especially patient with me, instructing me in office procedures, computer passwords, etc. And our caretaker, Ron Kneller, is always there when I need him to unlock a door or carry some equipment into my office. I have attended several committee meetings and have conducted a few Bible studies and gotten to meet several members, as well. The congregation of Neffs gives new meaning to the phrase "radical hospitality." It is a joy to be among you.

Secondly, the programs here at Neffs are truly amazing. Browsing your website and reading your

Newsletter prior to my arrival I had a brief glimpse of the energy and vitality of this congregation. Arriving here and experiencing things first hand has more than confirmed my initial expectations. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

Thirdly, the individuals whom I have met, worked with, and ministered with have been inspirations in themselves. Your faith, dedication, and commitment to the life of the congregation and the Church at large are inspiring. I am blessed to serve you.

Finally, (for now), I look forward to ministering with you in the months ahead. "God is still speaking," and I look forward to getting to know you in a deeper and more meaningful way. Wherever two or three are gathered in Jesus' name, the Risen Christ is present. Thanks be to God.

Pastor Allan Kramer-Moyer

Christmas Eve Yard Signs

Yard Signs are available for you to pick up after worship. If you already have a yard sign, please use it if it's in good shape. We ask that you place them in your yard or at important corners near your home to help us share the hope of the Christmas season with your neighbors and invite them to our church. Please hold onto signs for next year or return them to the church office in the New Year.

This effort is hosted by the Evangelism Committee and Sponsored by the Good News Fund.

Year End Donations

For donations to be credited in 2014 all donations need to be into the church office by **December 29, 2014**. Any donations received after December 29, 2014 will be credited for giving year 2015. Any questions please call the church office.

Home Visitation Members Birthdays



Anna Lord - Dec 2
5244 Grange Drive
Schnecksville, PA 18078-2249

Patricia Szapacs - Dec 15
3733 Phillips Rd
Slatington, PA 18080-3114

Ferne Strauss - Dec 18
6334 Lamar Ct
Slatington, PA 18080-3022

Reuben Christman - Dec 22
Whitehall Manor, Rm LL-C112A
1177 6th St
Whitehall, PA 18052

Barbara Carinci,
Church Administrator
will celebrate her
birthday on December
19th.

Mike Baer, Music Program Coordinator,
will celebrate his birthday
on December 23rd.



Book/Movie Club

Next Book is "Outlander" by Diana Gabaldon, meeting on **December 3 at 7pm** in Memory room. Contact Kathi Charles for more details at 610-462-5551 or kac4b@hotmail.com.



DO YOU HAVE UNWANTED HOLIDAY DECORATIONS?

It's that time of the year when you are decorating and un-decorating for the holidays. How many items do you keep in your holiday bin that you don't even use anymore?

SANTA'S ATTIC is looking for those unwanted decorations. Christmas, Thanksgiving, Halloween....even Easter decorations are welcome! Bring your "gently used" decorations to Memorial Hall and place them in the marked box on the stage during the months of **December and January**. Don't worry....you'll see them again next October at our Country Holidays Craft Show!

GO GREEN for the HOLIDAYS....let's reduce, reuse and recycle those decorations!

Country Holidays Craft Show

Thank you to the many, many people who helped to make this year's Craft Show such a wonderful day for our church and community. We hosted over 50 crafters and over 750 people during the day. It's a joy to have the Geiger Family Farm bring their wonderful potatoes and fall produce. And our kitchen crew always fills our stomachs with delicious food, especially those soups. We have some of the best bakers in the area who help to fill our dessert table and bake sale area. Again, thank you.



This event raised about \$4,000. This money is used to support things like the Neffs Fire Company, our Golden Times group, Helping Hands, the Knit Wits, and the church's General Fund. What a blessing to be able to support our church and these important ministries!

The committee who helps to organize this event includes: Mary Burdick, Janet Creitz, Deb Wenner, Linda Migliori, Maryann Puia, Lisa Wright, Susan Smith, Chrissy Shivok, Diane Schaller, Vicki Sorg, Claire Kern, Phil Wehr, Kathy Bonsell, and Pastor Kris. Thank you, thank you.

Thanks to our Office Helpers!

Madeline Bingell, Nancy Christman, Don & Eunice Diehl, Phyllis Hamm, Judy Hoffman, Eleanor & Ron Kleckner, Barbara Panner, Ruth Purner, Linda & Wilbur Romig, Jill Schlosser, Marianne Ulrich, and Jean & Stanley Wieand

STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFTS - In the tradition of giving gifts to friends and loved ones, we as a congregation have traditionally expressed our love and appreciation for our hard-working pastors and staff by presenting each with a monetary gift. If you'd like to share in this gift, please send a check payable to Susan Ondrey, 2901 Strohl Rd, Allentown, PA 18104 no later than Sunday, Dec 21. Any questions, email Sue at ondrey@ptd.net.

Financial & Attendance Reports

	<u>Operating Fund</u>	<u>Designated Funds</u>	<u>Grand Total All Funds</u>
7-1-2014	\$ 9,644.00	\$21,417.00	\$31,061.00
Income	\$128,793.00	\$17,778.00	\$146,571.00
Expenses	\$131,319.00	\$18,002.00	\$149,321.00
10-31-2014	\$7,118.00	\$21,193.00	\$28,311.00

Designated Funds category includes offerings for NIN, Mother's Day, OGHS, Lenten, Advent, Improvement Fund, Flowers, Directory, Bulletins, Phoebe Campaign, & Special Gifts.

Memorials

The following donations were accepted into The Funds of Lasting Gifts Thomas Family Fund of Union UCC in honor of the **Rev. Thomas N. Thomas:**

Steve & Jane Escott, Floyd & Barbara Beitler, Gail Wotring, Rex Family (Bryan & Lisa), Jeff & Elaine Schoemaker, Marlene A. Dorman, Andrew & Patrice Wight, Theresa & Sydney Stoner, Veronica, John & Shelby Fabian, Susan Hoffman, Darlene & Kate Dreisbach, Deborah & James Vater

The following donations have been accepted into the Union UCC Memorial Fund in memory of **Kathryn M. (Everett) Praetorius:**

David J. Pisko, Lawrence & Lynne Pruneski, Mary Lou Pruneski Don & Marlene Steffy,

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship Service</u>		<u>CC/ Nursery</u>	<u>Total</u>
	<u>8AM</u>	<u>10:30AM</u>		
October 5	109	235	40	384
October 12	68	162	41	271
October 19	140	360	48	548
October 26	113	287	41	441
TOTAL ATTENDANCE				
<u>October 2013</u> – 1,436 <u>October 2014</u> - 1,644				
AVG ATTENDANCE				
<u>October 2013</u> –359 <u>October 2014</u> - 411				

The following donation has been accepted into the Union UCC Memorial Fund in memory of **Barbara A. Kern:**

Donald L. Kern, Sr., Dennis & Judy Miller & Family

The following donations have been accepted into the Union UCC Memorial Fund in memory of **Thelma Trobetsky:**

Janet L. Long, Carol & Franklin Fisher, Jr.

Weddings

Congratulations to the following couples who were joined in marriage under the care of Union UCC:

Traci Schmoyer and Brian Hoffman—November 1, 2014

Tales From the Road

By Rev. Dr. Patience Stevenson, Minister of Visitation

Village Effect-Living in Community

As a church we offer many opportunities to gather as a community. Every time you attend worship, coffee hour, a committee meeting, a church wide event, or participate in a mission outreach event you are participating in the "communal" life of the church. Don't you catch yourself sharing snippets from your daily life with your pew mates, fellow committee members or fellow volunteers at an event? We all need to share our lives with others – from small day-to-day details to tragedies and catastrophic events. The support we give and receive one another is critical to our spiritual, intellectual and yes, physical well-being.

The early church really knew what they were doing when they "devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Next time you're tempted to skip worship, Sunday School or a committee meeting, think again. There are reasons that the writer of Hebrews said, **"Let us not give up meeting together,..., but let us encourage one another..."**

In addition to the spiritual benefits of social connections (such as we have with friends and acquaintances at church, family members, neighbors and other friends) scientists are discovering the importance of these connections for our heart health, brain health and emotional health. (You already knew that, didn't you?)

So, keep up your disciplines of attending worship, Sunday School (children and adults), church-wide events, and participating in the work of the church through committees. Know that you are making God happy, helping your church family and friends and helping yourself!



Consistory Minutes

by Jennifer Young (subject to approval)

The monthly meeting of the Union United Church of Christ Consistory Meeting was called to order on Monday, November 17th, 2014 by Vice President Brad Hackett.

The Treasurer's Report and October/November bills were presented and approved.

Property and Maintenance Committee reported that Progress in Grove going very well. Pavilion is under way. Malfunction with boy's room downstairs. Urinal was fixed. Elevator was serviced/Quarterly Maintenance.

Christian Education Committee reported that for Trunk or Treat- 150 children went through. 225 hot dogs and soft pretzels were served, donated by Blues Night Out. Sadly, only 17 cars participated. It would be great to get more participation for next year. Barb Korastinsky will be new safe child coordinator. Bus trip to Cinderella is on- 45 people going. The Nature's Vision Catalog fundraiser is going until the 25th. Advent Craft and Brunch- December 7th.

Mission Committee reported that the Toilet Paper Challenge is going well- up to 800 rolls and counting.

Church and Ministry reported that their big topic- Marriage Equality- should be brought up as a major topic during a consistory meeting in the future.

Evangelism Committee reported that their Next meeting- December 8th- make plans for Souper Bowl February 1st, 2015.

Fellowship Committee reported that at the Thanksgiving Service- there will be baked goods for after service. They are making strattas for Advent Brunch Dec 7th.

Worship Committee reported that they are in need of new candles in front of altar. In addition, in the sanctuary our sound system has a CD burner- we burn CD's for people who are unable to be in worship. It needs to be replaced. We would like to try to get it taken care of by Christmas.

The next regular meeting of the Union United Church of Christ Consistory will be held Monday, December 15th, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in Room 101.

UNION UCC CHURCH STAFF

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Acting Lead Pastor
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assocpastor@unionucc.org

Rev. Allan Kramer-Moyer
Interim Pastor
interimpastor@unionucc.org

Rev. Patience Stevenson
Pastor of Visitation
vispastor@unionucc.org

Rev. Thomas N. Thomas
Pastor Emeritus

Kathy L. Bonsell
Director of Christian Education
dired@unionucc.org

Barbara Carinci
Church Administrator
administrator@unionucc.org

Tara Henninger
Communications Coordinator
secretary@unionucc.org

Mike Baer
Music Coordinator
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Blake Hoppes
Organist/Accompanist
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Neffs PA 18065-0066

www.unionucc.org

Preschool Office:
610-767-5327

Ronald Kneller
Facility Caretaker
caretaker@unionucc.org

Church Telephone Extension Directory 610-767-6961

Pastor Kris	ext. 25
Pastor Allan	ext. 24
Pastor Patience	ext. 23
Barbara Carinci	ext. 21
Tara Henninger	ext. 22
Kathy Bonsell	ext. 27
Mike Baer	ext. 26
Kitchen	ext. 30

Children's Programs

Nursery to 6th Grade

Contact: Kathy Bonsell 610-767-6961
Email: dired@unionucc.org



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD UPDATE: Our congregation donated 70 filled shoeboxes for this world-wide holiday mission project. A HUGE thanks to those who donated, to the Mission Committee for helping with postage costs and to Kathy Milander for all her help!

STEWARDSHIP BOXES

On November 23rd, Stewardship Sunday, the children in Children's Church and Sunday School received Stewardship boxes. The children are asked to do chores around the house to earn money for their boxes. Their goal is \$5.00. The money collected will be added to our church's Advent collection for NIN, Daybreak and the Sixth Street Shelter.

Sunday School 's 3rd Annual

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA - DEC. 21

Please arrive by 9:15, when breakfast will be served by your Sunday School teachers, in their PAJAMAS! You are also invited to wear your pajamas to church.

We will also have games and a very special visitor.

OUR CHRISTMAS MISSION: Please return your STEWARDSHIP BOX

PARENTS: We could use your help with dessert. Please bring one dozen of your favorite Christmas cookies to Fellowship Hall.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Our new Children's Church curriculum, WHIRL, is a big hit with the leaders and the children. The children see a fun, short video, read the lectionary scripture in the new WHIRL story Bibles and NRSV Bibles, and complete two to three activities in their leaflets.

PARENTS: The children will bring home at-home activities weekly which go along with the lesson. It would be great if you could find one activity to do at home during the week.

CIA MISSIONS

(Children In Action—K-6)

December— Baking cookies for the homebound
Friday, Dec. 12, 6-8pm



January— Family Bowling at Slate Bowl Jan 18
Please RSVP or send questions to Tammy and Jennifer at NeffsCIA@gmail.com

All Christian Education Volunteers:

Sunday School,
Children's Church,
VBS, CIA,
Little Lambs Nursery,
Family Lent Night
helpers and
CE Committee.....



Gift Bibles will be presented at the end of the year to third graders and above who have attended 75% of Children's Church or Sunday School sessions.

Thank you for participating in our CE Committee fundraisers to support this program.



Sunday, December 7, 2014

2nd Sunday of Advent, Guest Musicians PA Guitar Quintet

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service

Text: Mark 1: 1-8 Message

Message: "Walking a New Path"

Rev. Kris P. Snyder-Samuelson

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Carol Pope

10:30 - Dave Fleming

Greeters: Rick & Natalie Rice, Dave & Karen Fleming

Acolytes: 8AM - Dylan Kuntz

10:30AM - Rebekah Lorah, Madison Milander

Sunday, December 14, 2014

3rd Sunday of Advent

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service

Adult Choir Musical: *Breath of Heaven*

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Lucille Kuhns

10:30 - Don Penrod

Greeters: Jane Schappell, Dana Krisko

Acolytes: 8AM - Tegan Haley

10:30AM - Abbey Hafler, Abigail Hill

Sunday, December 21, 2014

4th Sunday of Advent

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service

Text:

Message: "What Happens When You Follow A Star"

Rev. Allan Kramer-Moyer and Rev. Kris Snyder-Samuelson

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Andy Wight

10:30 - Doug Albert

Greeters: Kim Krempasky, Ron Snyder

Acolytes: 8AM - Rachael Bath

10:30AM - Gabriel Horvath, Dylan Kuntz

Christmas Eve -Wednesday, December 24, 2014

5pm Family Service - Candlelight, Children & Youth Choirs, Special Music

Arrest These Merry Gentlemen: A Christmas musical led by our Children and Youth Choirs

Sermon: Rev. Kris P. Snyder-Samuelson

Lay Reader: Justin Solt

Acolytes: Jacob Klinger, Jacob Roth

8pm - Carol, Communion & Candle Lighting

Text: Luke 2.1-14

Message: : "Now About Those Shepherds..."

Sermon: Rev. Dr. Allan Kramer-Moyer

Lay Reader: Harry Burger

Acolytes: Dylan Kuntz

11pm - Carols, Communion & Candle Lighting

Text: Isaiah 9:2-7

Message: "Loves True Light"

Sermon: . Kris P. Snyder-Samuelson

Lay Reader: Dave Fleming

Acolytes: Jason Check, Brandon Zellner

Sunday, December 28, 2014

1st Sunday after Christmas/Young Adults

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service CFW/Sunday Morning Alive

Text: Luke 2:22-40

Message: "Another Book About Jesus!?"

Rev. Kris P. Snyder-Samuelson

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Young Adults

10:30 - Young Adults

Greeters: Joel & Dana Gaumer, Doug & Claire Kern

Acolytes: 8AM - Christopher Bath

10:30AM - Ian Schory, Kaitlin Mericle



Holy Grounds

Coffee Hour

Every Sunday

9:15-10:15 & 11:30-12:00

Continues on Sundays after 8am and 10:30 Worship Services and in between the services in Memorial Hall (on the same level as the sanctuary). Stop by for snack or drink, to say hello to a friend, or learn about something new about a committee.

Thank you to our hosting committees:

Dec. 7— Advent Brunch

Dec. 14— Confirmation Class

Dec. 21— Consistory

Dec. 28—No Committee

Our Next Chapter in Our Life Together

As we turn the page from thirty years of ministry and leadership by our newly honored Pastor Emeritus, Tom Thomas, to our next chapter in our faith journey as a people of God, we will implement our Interim Plan.

The Interim Plan which was proposed by Church & Ministry upon consultation with our Conference Minister and adopted by Consistory, begins immediately. Most congregations take at least a year to prepare for and call a pastor. Since we are a relatively large church with multiple programs and staff, it could take even longer.

Among the many tasks we must complete before searching for our next Senior Pastor are: (1) Develop a plan for Ministry and Mission (long range plan) which will include surveying members, focus groups, meetings with staff, committees, lay leaders etc.,(2) Do some visioning on where we want to go in the next 3-5 years as a congregation, the types of ministry we want to pursue, missions we want to embark on, worship styles we want to keep or change,(3) complete our congregational profile which we will use to begin our search.

Since we have not completed a comprehensive plan or prepared a congregational profile in over thirty years, we have much work to do in the upcoming months. Pastoral candidates will expect we have done our part to prepare for our next called senior pastor by thoroughly examining our vision of who we are and what characteristics we desire in our next leader.

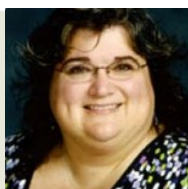


We have called **Rev. William Metzger** to work with us as a Consulting Interim Pastor who will lead us through a process that will help us discern God's call and planning for our future ministry and mission. "Pastor Bill" will begin working with our leaders to develop a Leadership Planning Team who

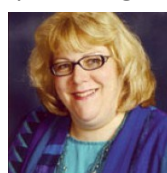
will begin work in January and will be with us for the next 12-18 months in order for us to complete the tasks. It is impossible to determine exactly how long this process will take (will depend on our pace of work, time available from our lay and clergy leadership, challenges, other unforeseen factors) but it often takes between 12-18 months.

While this work is occurring, we will, of course continue to provide the ministries and worship experiences we all need and have come to rely on. The Interim Plan calls for our newly created Interim Team to lead us during this time of transition.

Pastor Kris will serve as Acting Lead Pastor. A full description of her new duties will be disseminated later but will include staffing the committees previously staffed



by the Senior Pastor, serving as chief of staff (administration), increased duties with worship/preaching, weddings, funerals etc.



Pastor Patience's hours have been increased to allow her to continue with our visitation list, Golden Times and Adult Sunday Morning class but she will add hospital visitations and funerals to her portfolio.

We have called **Rev. Dr. Allan Kramer-Moyer** to join us for 25 hours per week as our Interim Assisting Pastor who will provide worship leadership/preaching, hospital visits, weddings, funerals, and will assist with Bible study classes. "Pastor Allan" joined us on November 4th. We welcome him to our church family and eagerly look forward to his ministry among us.



The Interim Plan also calls for lay leadership to assume enhanced roles with our High School Choir (**Chris Hamm**), Youth Group (**Dave DiPaolantonio**) and Confirmation Class (**Dan Topp, Sue Ondrey and Karen Nuschke**).

I am confident that we have a great interim plan in place and a seasoned staff including three clergy who are "real pros" who will provide us with their diverse gifts honed by their many years of pastoral leadership and lay leaders who have been ministering among us many years as well. I think we will be well served.

We have much to accomplish in the next year(s) as we prepare for new leadership to take us well into the next decade. We will continue to communicate on our progress as we journey along this time of transition. Everyone will have the opportunity to play an important role and participate in developing our plan for Ministry and Mission as we boldly move forward. I ask for your patience, your participation and for your prayers as we journey together during this interim time.

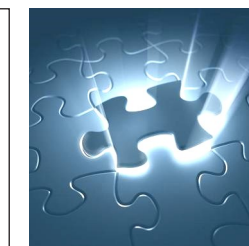
David Fleming, Chair
Church & Ministry Committee

Hospital Info Update:

If you are in the hospital, please ask a family member, friend, or the hospital chaplain to call a pastor or the church office to let us know if you'd like us to visit. **Please do not rely on the church code system to tell us since it has proven to be inconsistent with information.** Our church code is 511 and if you are listed correctly, when we call the chaplain's office, you will appear under our number. Usually the pastors do hospital visits on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays hoping they will catch everyone at some point during their stay. We are more than glad to visit and pray with you, so **please don't hesitate to call on us.**

Youth Group News 6th-12th Grades

**For more information contact: Pastor Kris assocpastor@unionucc.org 610-657-6007 Cell Or Dave DiPaolantonio at 610-349-9162 and youth_group@unionucc.org.
Facebook: Union UCC Youth Group [www.unionucc.org/Ministries/Youth Group](http://www.unionucc.org/Ministries/Youth%20Group)
Anyone who is in grades 6-12 is considered a member of youth group. Any parent, guardian of our youth or adult can assist youth group. Friends and families are always invited (unless noted).**



Fri Dec 5 – Christmas Shopping (We'll be adopting 2 kids) Meet at church at 6:30, home by 10. Bring money for dessert on the way home.
Sign up by Nov 30.

Fri Dec 12—6-8pm Help our Junior Youth Group (CIA) Bake Christmas Cookies for our Older Members



Sun Dec 14 Advisory Team Meeting and Lunch
11:30am-1pm

Christmas Eve Worship 5pm 8pm 11pm
Youth Group Decorates with Luminaries—sign up to help.



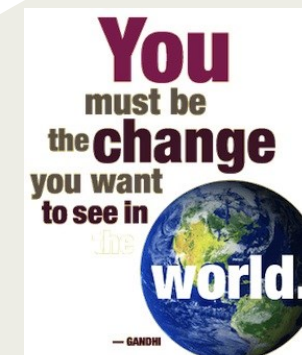
Sun Jan 18 11:30am-1pm Spuds and Suds Lunch
Baked Potato Lunch with over 15 toppings!
Donate a topping, help to serve/clean up.
\$5 per person for 1 potato and beverage.
Fundraiser !



Looking Ahead: Sun March 22 Youth Sunday at 10:30 Worship

SUMMER MISSION TRIP—watch for more details.
We're heading to Pittsburgh with other UCC kids to the Pittsburgh Project (pittsburghproject.org) for a week of helping others and putting our faith into action.

The week of July 13th, 2014 * (9th-12th grade only)
\$50 Deposit due NOW (by December 7th)
Let Pastor Kris know if you're thinking about this.
Church and Youth Group will help pay your way (if you help with fundraisers).



Sunday Morning Alive

Sunday Morning Alive leads worship on Sundays at 10:30 for about six Sundays throughout the year.

We have a worship team that includes a group of singers, guitar players, keyboards and drums.

We play traditional and favorite hymns as well as contemporary and alternative worship music.

Dec. 28 at
10:30
Worship

Top Ten Reasons Pastor Tom is Really Retiring

10. The dust bunnies in his office were beginning to multiply so badly, that Phil Wehr heard Pastor Tom talking to them one day.
9. His wife Kathy was tired of never getting to out on Saturday nights. He's been secretly taking ballroom dance lessons and hopes to do so every day so that now they can go dancing EVERY Saturday night.
8. The cost of Pastor Kris's bill for therapy sessions from him was outweighing his actual pay from the church. He's now employed as her personal spiritual director.
7. He secretly loves early bird senior specials at restaurants and can't wait to go to every one of them. He will miss our church's cooks and potlucks though, and that's one of the reasons he wanted to have a picnic in the grove so that he could enjoy your cooking one more time.
6. He plans on joining the Boombadiers and touring the Lehigh Valley with them so that he can play his boomba full-time.
5. He loves Vicki Sorg's soups at Golden Times and plans to create his own senior center making his homemade soups from his garden vegetables. It will be hosted in his home, every Tuesday. Everyone is invited. EVERY Tuesday, in his home.
4. He appreciates the hard work of our quilters and knitters so much that he plans to take up quilting and knitting. AND he's submitting his work for prizes in the Schnecksville Fair, watch out ladies!
3. He loves changing diapers and can't wait to change every single one of his grandson Tanner's diapers, every day, Monday to Friday, 7am-3pm. Tom, have you really thought about this?
2. He wants to spend more time with his family – especially his wife Kathy and his 99 year-old mother. He can't wait to do their chore lists they have for him. Too late now Tom, no turning back, we have your office keys. Happy retirement.
1. Pastor Tom rarely makes huge mistakes while leading worship. But on his grandson's baptism day, he accidentally named him the wrong name and said Tyler, instead of Tanner. So the number one reason Pastor Tom is retiring is to learn his grandson's name (and to give him as much time and love as possible)! We wish you all the best, Pastor Tom.

Golden Times

(Senior Adults) *For those wise in years and young at heart.*

Our next gathering will be **Tues., December 2.** Friendship, homemade soup, lunch, dessert and a program ~ Free!

Sarajane Williams, M.A., is a licensed psychologist, professional harpist and harp therapist. She writes: *The harp, the instrument of angels, presents a perfect paradigm for linking heaven and earth, the arts and sciences, as well as body, mind and spirit. The sonorous sounds of the harp, and the marriage of its historical legacy as a divine, archetypal instrument of healing has given birth to a new type of Vibroacoustic Therapy.*

Sarajane will present a concert of holiday music, along with sharing reflections and experiences as a harp therapist. Her work is described on her website: www.vibroacousticharp.com
Note of interest: Sarajane attended Neff's as a little girl.

Pastor Tom's Celebration

Union UCC's church grove was full of excitement on Oct 26, 2014 celebrating Pastor Tom's retirement and also celebrating the past, present and future accomplishments of our church family. Over 425 people gathered around the stage and under the tent to enjoy a beautiful fall day, four generations of members all together in the grove.

A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped to make that day a success and a beautiful memory.

- The Lorah Family for their delicious Pig Roast
- All members who brought favorite food dishes and desserts
- The Fellowship Committee, the Grill Team and all helpers who helped to serve food, drinks, desserts, set up and clean up.
- Funds of Lasting Gifts for funding the cost of the tent, DJ, and Roast
- Country Sale Group and Blues Nite Out for cost of food and drinks.
- All in attendance.

Thanks to everyone who made this day the BEST pot luck picnic and party EVER. Look for more information of the Thomas Family Fund in the January 2015 newsletter.



Adult Study

Friday Morning Adult Class

9:30 am-11am Room 5 (Basement) Everyone is welcome at any time as your schedule allows:

Pastor Allan will be leading discussions about the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth, exploring how different Gospel writers present the story of Jesus' birth in their own unique ways. In the process of our discussions, participants will be invited to explore the meaning of Christmas for themselves. Studies will include:

December 5 Matthew's Christmas Story: Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

December 12 Luke's Christmas Story: Jesus is the Savior of the World.

December 19 John's Christmas Story: Jesus is the Logos made Flesh.

No Class December 26th, Resume January 2

Thank You

I am in my third week of retirement. For the first week I visited my mother in Richmond. She supervised me as I tackled the yard work she assigned to me. In the second week I addressed my own yard and garden work. Now in the third week, I have begun caring for grandson Tanner, while his parents work. As many of you warned me, this last task is more demanding than a full time job. I fall into bed at night reminded of the experience of two-a-day practices preparing for the upcoming football season.

Thank you all for a very meaningful and joyful retirement day on October 26. My family and I were overwhelmed with the many ways by which you demonstrated your appreciation for my ministry among you. You sparked cherished memories. I am grateful for the many ways that we served God together through the years. Even In the months leading up to that special day, you expressed your gratitude in so many ways that I am humbled.

I know that Pastor Kris, Pastor Patience, and Pastor Allan and the other wonderful staff members will serve you well.



Grace and peace,
Thomas N. Thomas,
Pastor Emeritus

Sunday Morning Adult Class

9:15-10:15 am Room 5 (Basement) Everyone is welcome at any time as your schedule allows:

December 7 "The Stories of Advent" We will discuss Luke's prelude to the birth narratives of Jesus. Pastor Allan

December 14 "The First Christmas" We will look at this book authored by Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan to learn more about the history, culture, and context of Jesus' birth and of Matthew and Luke's telling of the first Christmas. Pastor Kris

December 21 "The First Christmas" continued. Pastor Kris

December 28 "The Year in Review" We will use Ecclesiastes 3 " ... for everything there is a season....." to discuss significant personal and historical events of 2014. Pastor Allan

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Every Tuesday 7-8:30PM room 5.



We will study The Book of Revelations with a DVD video series led by Dr. Mickey Efid. Harry B. Burger invites you to come learn new things and grow in faith. Contact Harry B. Burger 610-767-5344.

Dear Pastor Kris and Union UCC Family, Thank you for the lovely red roses you gave me at Tom's pig roast, and the vase of roses on our table. My daughter-in-law took the vase and I was happy to share the single roses with Longswamp church staff. Their vibrant color brings cheer to our office desks. We all enjoyed the pig roast and the delightful array of tempting dishes. What a memorable day it was. Thank you all so much for making it happen. I know every church has challenging days ahead, and I wish the Union UCC family God's blessings on their next chapter. Thank you all once again for all your kindness in the last 30 years.

Grace and Peace,
Kathy Brearley



Mission Committee

The Mission Committee has announced that the advent offering will be divided among three worthy programs. The Neighbors in Need program of the United Church of Christ will receive \$300. The remainder will be divided between the Sixth Street Shelter and the Daybreak Program of the Lehigh County Conference of Churches.

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. For more examples of the great programs funded by Neighbors in Need, visit www.ucc.org/nin

The **Sixth Street Shelter** in Allentown, the largest family shelter in the region, has been providing housing and case-work services to homeless families with children since 1984. It is a program of the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley. The shelter has 25 units and provides intensive programming for up to 60 days. During their stay, family members work with the Shelter's caseworkers to design a goal plan, which includes a search for permanent housing, life skills education, and a budget plan.

The **Daybreak** program of Lehigh County Conference of Churches began in 1979 as a response to the release of large numbers of state mental hospital patients into the community without the necessary supports. Daybreak's purpose is to prevent homelessness by offering self-sufficiency programs for men and women who have successfully completed or who are currently being treated for mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, or HIV/AIDS. In a recent year, more than 250 individuals – 80 percent of them homeless or at risk of being homeless – were assisted.

Great Toilet Paper Challenge



Thank you to everyone for supporting Union UCC's Great Toilet Paper Challenge. The mountain of toilet paper in the church foyer was super impressive this year, climbing higher and higher each week, close to reaching the ceiling. Our **goal of collecting over 2200 rolls of toilet paper** is an awesome achievement, final totals will be provided in the church bulletin.

During December, the toilet paper will be distributed to the Northern Lehigh Food bank, Lehigh County Conference of Churches, the Allentown Rescue Mission and other local mission agencies. Union UCC has truly made a difference for thousands of families in the Lehigh Valley. Thank you, The Mission Committee.

Outerwear Collection

The Mission Committee has a special project that will begin on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and will continue for the **entire month of December**.

The project is collecting cold-weather accessories for local families living at the Sixth Street Shelter in Allentown. Donations of new **hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, and socks** in men's, women's, and children's sizes are needed for the colder winter months ahead.

Since 1984, the Shelter has been providing temporary housing for Lehigh Valley homeless families with children. Today, the Sixth Street Shelter proudly offers 19 individual family apartments. It is the only shelter in the Valley to offer homeless families the privacy and security of a furnished apartment with a complete kitchen. The philosophy of the Sixth Street Shelter, in keeping with the broader mission of the CACLV, encourages those it serves to accept responsibility for themselves.

Sunday Sponsors:

We are in need of sponsors weekly for Adult/Children's Bulletins, Spread the Good News and Flower Baskets.

Flowers (\$30) Phyllis Hamm at 610-349-0324; Bulletins (\$20, \$8) Ruth Purner at 610-432-1761 Spread the Good News (\$20)

Tara Henninger, 610-767-6961

or see our website at www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give.



Paul Tomlin is our Catch the Spirit recipient for November. He will be recognized on December 14, 2014 at the 10:30am worship service.

Paul is currently on the Consistory, a member of the Stewardship committee, usher. He also helps at Blues Nite Out, Country Sale, and decorating the outside of the church for Christmas.

Paul is originally from Upper Darby, PA. and was raised a Lutheran. He met his wife, Norma in Jim Thorpe, over 30 years ago. Paul and Norma have two sons Joey and Jonathan and a step daughter Stace. They also have two grand children Zack and Mackenzie. Paul has worked for Xerox Corp. as a technician for 38 years.

Paul says "I look forward to attending services on Sunday and appreciate the community assistance the church provides." He also adds, "What drew us to Neff's UCC was the youth programs provided by the church."

Thank you, Paul for sharing your time and talents with us here at, Union UCC.

Stewardship Committee

Blessed to be a Blessing "... all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Union UCC is blessed with caring pastors, supportive office staff, energized education and music leaders, and responsible church caretakers.

Union UCC is blessed with a supportive, caring and loving congregation to carry on the traditions and missions of the church.

Union UCC is blessed with responsible leaders and organizers to lead the way.

Count your blessings and grow with your church family, there are opportunities to grow your faith through music, education, mission, and more. Think about joining a committee, a group, helping at a fundraiser or mission project, or create a new activity. Your life will be blessed even more when you share your time, treasures and talents with your church, the community and the world.

Join your church family this Christmas Season at Union UCC. Merry Christmas.

2015 Envelope Packets

Envelope packets for 2015 will be ready for pickup after Thanksgiving. Please pick up your packets in Memorial Hall, along with those of family members, neighbors or friends. The more envelope packets picked up, the more we save on postage costs.

Please do not use the new envelopes until 2015, everyone gets new numbers each year. Thank you, The Stewardship Committee.

Service Dog at Union UCC

You may be surprised to see a puppy at church when you are coming to a meeting, or to church service in the next few months. Please ask first if you can pet him, as he needs to learn the proper way to greet people, and some days he may be too excited for greeting.

Marcus, a golden retriever/ Labrador retriever cross puppy, from Phoenix Assistance Dogs in Lititz, PA, is being raised by Jane and Dave Schappell and will be on the church grounds frequently. The more a puppy experiences (sights, sounds, and smells), the more the puppy learns, and the greater their ability will be to handle new situations later in life which is why service dogs in training need to be out in public as much as possible. Since he is a very young puppy, he will be learning appropriate behavior as well. We hope you enjoy meeting him and seeing him grow and learn during the time we will have him with us.



Women's of Union UCC



Union UCC Women's Retreat April 17-19, 2015 Trout Lake Retreats, Stroudsburg

Members, Friends, Family members are invited.
Theme: Garden Getaway ~ Where Women Walk with God

Cost: \$125 (Collecting \$60 deposit now through January 1st, final payment due April 5.)

Pay to "Union UCC" either by mail or drop in mailbox at church. Be sure to mark your check "Women's Retreat."

Leaders: Pastor Kris and the Planning Team

Our Church Family in the News...

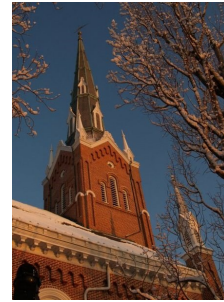
- **Carol Pope, Brian Horwith, and Scott Nagle** were pictured in the Parkland Press feature on the Country Holidays Craft Show.
- **Veronica Fabian** was featured in the Oct. 19, Go Guide of The Morning Call, in an article about her story of being a breast cancer survivor
- **Abby Hill and Sam Gerry** were the Orefield Middle School's production of *Narnia*.
- **Alexis Midduagh** was one of the leads in Northern Lehigh High School's Fall Play, *Get Smart*.
- **Tara Henninger** has her artwork in the Dog House Art Gallery in Boyertown, their open house was on November 9th.



www.facebook.com/unionneffs

Property Committee

December is the most wonderful time of the year to visit Union United Church of Christ. The Christmas spirit fills the air, beautiful Christmas decorations adorn the sanctuary, Christmas festivities fill the rooms with children, adults, and families all celebrating the birth of Christ. The poinsettia tree makes its annual appearance on Christmas Eve, along with candle stands, and the manger scene.



Thank you to the many people who help to transform our church property for the Christmas season. Everyone is invited to join in the Christmas festivities, please check the church calendar, there is something special going on each week. Join your church family during this most wonderful time of the year.

On Christmas Eve, please arrive early giving ample time to find a parking spot and seating in the sanctuary. The grove parking lot will be fully lit and available for all to safely park. Prelude music will be starting before the services, so plan to come early and enjoy our church members sharing their talents of music and song. Let the celebration begin.

Merry Christmas to all.

Did You Know?

- You can get **weekly emails** updating you on the events and Sunday services at church?
- You can get your monthly **newsletter online**?
- We have a **Facebook** page: Facebook.com/unionneffs
- You can sign up for **E-giving** at no cost to you?
- You can sign up to sponsor bulletins, flowers and the good news on **Sign-up Genius**?

To sign up to get emails/e-newsletter, sponsor on Sign-Up Genius, or for E-giving visit our website: **WWW.UNIONUCC.ORG** and click on the **RESOURCES** tab or send an email to: **secretary@unionucc.org**

RX Corner

by Ann Kirka, R.Ph.

Flu season is here! If you haven't already received your influenza vaccine, now is the time. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends vaccination for everyone 6 months of age and older- it's the best way to protect yourself and your family from getting the flu. Below are some fun facts about the flu vaccine- be informed and get vaccinated.

- Flu activity peaks between December and February, but can span from October to May.
- It takes 2 weeks after an influenza shot for antibodies to develop and provide protection from the flu.
- Each year's vaccine is different and protects against different strains- strains that are predicted to be the most common.
- Effectiveness of flu vaccination generally lasts through the end of flu season.
- This year's formulation of vaccines includes a trivalent (3-strain) injection, a quadrivalent (4-strain) injection, a high-dose trivalent (3-strain) injection (for ages 65+), and a nasal spray. All are effective in protecting against the flu.
- You can NOT get the flu from getting a vaccine, but vaccination can result in a sore arm, low fever, or mild achiness.
- Up to 156 million flu vaccine doses are being manufactured for US distribution- NO shortage is expected.

Flu vaccines are available at doctors' offices, walk-in clinics, urgent care centers, and a number of local and chain pharmacies. Legislation was recently passed in Pennsylvania allowing registered and specially trained pharmacists to provide immunizations- most pharmacies don't require appointments for vaccines, so it could save you a trip to the doctor and/or an office visit fee. Often times, the vaccine costs are covered as preventative care through insurance. Don't delay- get your shot today!



In November, we made turkeys, and had fun watching our volcanoes erupt. We went outside to watch a "big volcano" erupt!

We spent the month learning about the first Thanksgiving, discussing all the things for which we are thankful, and preparing for our feasts. The children dressed as pilgrims and Indians as they enjoyed their Thanksgiving feasts.

Last call for anyone interested in purchasing Kidstuff (\$25) and Enjoy the City SaveAround (\$20) books. The books make great Christmas gifts! The sales will end December 5th. If you would like to purchase a book, please stop by the Preschool office or call (610) 767-5327.

We thank everyone who donated items for the used clothing and household item drive which we held in November. All of our fundraisers benefit our Preschool children by providing funds to help with field trip costs and with the purchase of new equipment.

HELP WANTED: Neffs Preschool is looking for a **TEACHER ASSISTANT**. The assistant will work with 4 year olds and PreK children on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays, beginning January 5, 2015. Monday and Wednesday hours are 8:30-3:30 and Friday hours are 8:30-1:30. Applicants need to have early childhood experience or early childhood certification. Please send resume to Neffs Preschool, 5550 Route 873, Neffs, PA 18065. Contact Linda Migliori at 610-767-5327 or preschool@unionucc.org for more information. Application deadline: December 12, 2014.

Helping Hearts and Communion Ministers

Our Helping Hearts group cares for our members on our visitation list by delivering flowers sponsored by church members and by visiting, sharing prayers and Christian friendship. Our Communion Ministers also share in this ministry by delivering communion. **Our next meeting will be on December 11th.**