



▶ INTERIM PASTOR 2

○ Issue 2

○ Vol. 40

○ February 2016



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HONORING THE PAST * CELEBRATING THE PRESENT
BUILDING THE FUTURE

Lent 2016

By Pastor Kris

Gifts of the Dark Wood: Seven Blessings for Soul Skeptics (and other Wanderers)

Starting on Ash Wednesday, February 10th, and continuing through Easter we will be using a series based on the book *Gifts of the Dark Wood* by Eric Elnes. Here's the description of the book from the website:

Uncertain? Empty? Lost? Find companions who are willing to wander the unseen road ahead. It's okay to feel awkward in your search for God. You're not alone amid your holy mess. Author Dr. Eric Elnes believes that uncertainty about your spiritual life can be one of your greatest assets because it is while we are unsure that we probe, question, and discover. You don't need to be a saint or spiritual master to experience profound awakening and live with God's presence and guidance. You need only to wander.

On Sundays we'll be using this theme in worship throughout February and March and during the 9:15 Sunday Adult Class in February. Copies of the book will be available to purchase, purchase is not required.

You might like to purchase the book for your personal prayer time even if you don't join the class. Go to www.cokesbury.com or www.amazon.com.



Wednesday Night Bread for the Journey Series

February 17, February 24, March 2, and March 9

(If one session is cancelled the makeup snow date is March 16.)

You are invited to attend the whole night or the parts of the night that fit your schedule and interest.

6:15-7pm Potluck Supper in the basement (Fellowship Hall)

Bring a casserole, side dish or dessert to share.

7-7:15pm Worship in the Sanctuary

7:15-8pm Children's activities, movies, crafts and Random Acts of Kindness with Mrs. Bonsell

7:15-8pm Adults meet with Pastors Allan and Kris to watch and discuss the movie *The Way*.

An inspiring story about family, friends, and the challenges we face while navigating this ever-changing and complicated world. While hiking through "The Way of St. James" in France, Tom discovers the difference between "the life we live and the life we choose." How do we live life to the fullest?



From the Interim Pastor

Lent as a Season for Spiritual Growth

Lent is a season for self examination and spiritual growth. For Christians, spirituality is all about our relationship with God. We can develop our spirituality through reading the scriptures, through prayer, and through personal devotions and corporate worship.

I personally believe that the Bible is our greatest resource for spiritual growth. As we read stories about our Hebrew and Christian ancestors, we discover how God is present in our lives. The stories of how God called Moses to lead the Hebrews through the wilderness into the Promised Land; the stories of how God called prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah and Micah to proclaim justice and mercy in their respective generations, the stories of how God's wisdom was revealed to David, Solomon, Ecclesiastes, etc, and the stories of how God's love became manifest in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ... these stories help us discover how God is still speaking in our lives, calling us to recognize the cost and joy of discipleship.

The Bible suggests that there are four basic stages of spiritual growth.

1. The development of an **identity**: who are we and whose are we? Biblical resources such as The Torah, the 10 commandments, Jesus' Beatitudes (Mt 5), and

the Great Commandment: "Love God and love your neighbor as yourself (Mt 22:37) These passages help us understand who and whose we are.

2. The challenge of accepting the **cost and joy of discipleship**. The Hebrew prophets challenge us to be responsible to live according to God's commandments (Isaiah 61:1; Micah 6:8), and Jesus calls us to repentance and responsible living (Lk4:18).
3. We discover **wisdom**. We develop an understanding that life is a mystery to be experienced, not a problem to be solved (Proverbs 9:10; Ecclesiastes 3:1-11); and Jesus offers us the wisdom of his parables (Mt 13:34).
4. We are asked to **give ourselves up to God**. Jesus' Gethsemane prayer, "*Nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done,*" (Mk 14:36) becomes the guiding principle of our life.
5. Why not make this Lenten Season a time to grow your spirit? Join us for regular worship, attend our Wednesday evening Lenten programs, attend one of our Bible studies or Sunday morning adult classes. Come and hear how God is still speaking here at Union UCC.

Pastor Allan

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, January 18th, 2016 by President Brad Hackett.

The Treasurer's Report and December/January bills were presented and approved.

Property and Maintenance Committee—The upgrades to the WiFi Network have been completed. Selig Electric ran many new wires, and installed all of the new boxes. Jeff Herbine and Gary Yencho provided many hours of volunteer labor. They will be providing more information on the network at a later date. A proposal has been given for the purchase and installation of assistive wireless equipment for the sanctuary. The unit will be of great help to those with hearing difficulties, and bringing us closer to ADA compliance. Several requests were made and approved from Funds of Lasting Gifts:

15,000 to fund the services of the Vision Consultant as approved in 2014. Amount to be reimbursed to the Reserve Fund account, source of all bills paid.

From the property committee:

\$2,000- for annual expenses associated with the elevator

\$1,000- for annual gutter cleaning and slate repair

\$5,000- for miscellaneous property repairs, emergency or others during 2016

\$3,000- for the cost for upgrades to the wifi network

\$3,000- to purchase new assisted listening devices and equipment for the sanctuary.

From the Worship Committee:

\$2,000- for special music or guest pastors for services.

Christian Education Committee - Hoagie Sale and Gertrude Hawk Fundraisers starting- sponsor a box a smidgens for a young person in the Bethany Children's Home. Faith and Family Night- at the Phantoms on April 9th. During the week of March 20th- Education Hour will focus on a "walk through holy week". Wed. Lent Nights- Starting Feb. 17th- Potluck dinner-worship after (adults) and craft/activity (kids).

Mission Committee - February 7th is Souper Bowl Sunday. Blanket Sunday- February 14th and 21st. Lenten Self-Denial will go to Meals on Wheels and Turning Point. The Advent Self-Denial offering was \$2,729.00. There will be a Blood and Soup Drive (Sunday March 13th). Anyone who gives a pint of blood will get a pint of soup. Proceeds from the soup will go the Miller Keystone Blood Bank.

Welcoming Committee—Planning for Souper Bowl Sunday, Welcoming Sunday service Feb. 14, Lenten -Potluck dinner,

Stewardship Committee - preparing for the budget and meeting in June. The Stewardship campaign has raised over \$40,000 thus far. The Stewardship Team is looking for other members- if you are interested- contact Don directly.

Fellowship Committee-Meets Feb 1st to prepare for Pancake Supper.

The next regular meeting of the Union United Church of Christ Consistory will be held Monday, February 15th, 2016 at 6:45 p.m. in Room 101.



Stewardship By Don Penrod

Many thanks to all of you that participated in Union UCC's Stewardship Campaign. We are extremely grateful! Together, we have committed to giving over \$40,000 in addition to what we already give financially. This is a tremendous beginning and it will truly help fund the incredible plans your leadership team has put together. With our renewed focus and vision, we have an incredible future. One which is full of **hope**, of sharing **God's love** and of a **faithful commitment to serve OUR community** (near and far). Our ministry and mission is at the core of our church values. Through these ministries and missions, we share and give back to our members, our community, and to those in need. Here is just some of our helpful and important groups, committees, and events: Sunday Church Services, Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, the Knitwits, VBS, Sunday School, Children's Church, Bible Study, Blues Night Out, Pancake Supper, Souper Bowl Sunday, our Church Picnic, Easter Egg Hunt, Build Your Own Sundae, Women's Retreat, Men's Group, Pastor Visits, all of our Music Programs, Helping Hands, Golden Times, Helping Hearts, Northern Lehigh Food Bank, Second Harvest,this list can go on and on!! None of this could happen without your TIME, TALENT, and TREASURES.

WE are a vibrant, loving, and giving people. WE ARE...**Union UCC!**

1 Timothy 6:18- "Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share."

Yours in Christ,
The Stewardship Committee: Don Penrod, Rick Klingensmith, Aften Hamm, Bill Trussell, Leslie Thompson-Strack, Dennis Foster, Pastor Kris



2016 Envelope packets

REMINDER -To help offset the cost of the printing and shipping costs of your envelope packets, we encourage members to use the first initial offering envelope. This envelope may be provided to the church at any-time during the year.

Weekly envelopes provide for the ongoing mission of the church, please use your envelopes regularly in the collection plate or mail to the church office.

Special envelopes are directed to special ministries within the church, like Benevolence, Improvement, Music and Education, Pastor of Visitation or other special mission offerings.

Union UCC's current and future plan for ministry and mission is filled with HOPE and LOVE to the Neffs Community and to the World.

Keep God's mission at Union UCC strong and vibrant, show your support and give generously and regularly.

Thank you, The Stewardship Committee.

Additional Worship Opportunities and Easter

Wednesday, February 10 Ash Wednesday at 7pm
Share Communion, Receive Ashes

Thursday, March 24 Maundy Thursday 6-8pm Discipleship
Meal with Communion and Potluck
Bring a casserole, side dish or dessert to share.

March 25 Good Friday (Sanctuary will be open for prayer during the day.) 7pm Worship with Communion

March 27 Easter *6:40 am Sunrise Worship in the Cemetery with Communion *Note time change.
8am and 10:30am Worship with Communion

Take some extra time to walk with each other and with God during this special time of the year. Find strength and grace for the journey.

~ Pastor Kris

Children's Programs

Nursery to 6th Grade

Contact: Kathy Bonsell 610-767-6961

Email: dired@unionucc.org



BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY– Wed. Nights (Feb. 17, 24, Mar. 2, 9) 6:15-8 Join us on Wednesday evenings for a potluck meal with your family and friends, family worship time, and then a special Children's Time with Mrs. Bonsell and friends.

February

Children's Church

Feb. 7 Luke 9:28-36
 Feb. 14 Luke 4: 1-13
BLANKET SUNDAY
 Feb. 21 Genesis 15:1-12,17-18
 Feb. 28 Isaiah 55:1-9

First Communion Preparation

First Communion Preparation Class is scheduled for **Sunday, March 13**, after the 10:30 service. The class is open to all first graders and any other students (2nd through 7th grade) who have not previously attended the class and would like to participate in communion. The children and parents will join Mrs. Bonsell and Pastor Kris after the service. We hope to conclude the session by 12:30 pm. The children will receive their **first communion** on **Thursday, March 24th** during the Maundy Thursday evening service. The children will then be prepared to take communion on Easter Sunday. Please register with **Kathy Bonsell** before **March 6**.

Gertrude Hawk Candy

The children will receive order forms on Jan. 24th. Orders are due Feb. 21st and will be delivered in time for Easter.

SPONSOR a LIL SMIDGEN for Bethany Home
Buy a box of candy for \$7.
We will send it to the children for Easter.

CIA MISSION

(Children In Action—K-6)

FEBRUARY 19th, 6pm
Spaghetti dinner and a project—
WOODEN BAMBOO CHIMES

Please RSVP or send questions to Tammy, Kathy and Jennifer at NeffsCIA@gmail.com

BLANKET SUNDAY

Let's hug our neighbors with a nice, warm blanket. Church World Service provides blankets to victims of natural disasters in the United States and around the world. **ONLY \$5.00** buys a blanket! We will be collecting **BLANKET SUNDAY** envelopes in Children's Church on Feb. 14th.



IT's HOAGIE TIME

The children will receive hoagie order forms on January 24th. We will be making **ITALIAN** and **TURKEY** hoagies again this year. **\$5 each**. Order forms are due Feb. 27th. **HOAGIE PICK-UP** will be **MARCH 5th, 10-11am**.



2016 VBS PLANNING
TUESDAY,
FEBRUARY 23
 10am

The CE Committee invites you to join us.....

\$20 per ticket (Red Phantoms Attack Zone)
 See Kathy for an order form.
 (Tickets must be ordered by March 6th!)

Lehigh Valley PHANTOMS
 Faith and Family Night
Saturday, April 9th, 7:05pm
 PPL Center



Youth Group News 6th-12th Grades

Love Your
#Selfie 

**For more information contact: Pastor Kris assocpastor@unionucc.org 610-657-6007 Cell
Or Dave DiPaolantonio at 610-349-9162 and youthgroup@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).**

Tuesday, Feb 9 —Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Arrive at 5:45pm, help serve supper to our church family from 6-7pm. You and your family are welcome to stay and eat. Entertainment is from 7-8, optional. Sign up with PK.

Saturday, Feb 20 Free Fall Trampoline Park Meet at church at 5:30pm, 2 hours of fun, home by 9pm. Cost: \$20 ("Union UCC Youth Group") Due Feb 7 to Pastor Kris

Sunday, Feb 28 11:30am-1pm Advisory Team Meeting and Lunch

Sunday, March 6 is Youth Sunday! Mark your calendars and start thinking of how you want to participate. Sign up to greet, take the offering, read, preach (Seniors!), sing, dance and smile. Dave D is starting to collect \$5 for t-shirts. You can drop it in his mailbox or under PK's door.

Saturday, May 7 Church-wide Yard Sale 9am-2pm

Sign up to help serve drinks and to assist in the kitchen area.
And/or Youth Group sells Walking Tacos, Root Beer floats, Pretzels.

Sunday, May 15 Confirmation Day at 10:30am Worship

Show your love to this year's class.

Sunday, June 5 Graduate Sunday at 8am and/or 10:30am Worship Build Your Own Sundae Sunday Picnic in the Grove

Jesus Loves Me, This I Know



SUNDAY MORNINGS 9:15-10:15am
THE MUNCH BUNCH (6th & 7th grade 2nd Floor Room 203)
CONFIRMATION CLASS (8th grade Youth Room)
 Confirmands can go to The Breakfast Club when there is no class. **Confirmands can go to Breakfast Club when there isn't class.**
THE BREAKFAST CLUB (9th- 12th grade Room 4 Basement)



**National Youth Event 2016
Walt Disney World
July 25-30, 2016**

Church family: watch for a special envelope during the month of March for your chance to help support our youth and adults going to NYE.



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.

Next Sunday Morning Alive: Sunday, February 21 at 10:30 Worship

Golden Times

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

Our next gathering will be **Tuesday, February 2 12 noon – 1:30pm**

Program: "A Groundhog Day Special" with Keith Brintzenhoff Keith Brentzenhoff, an expert on Pennsylvania German music and folklore, will entertain us with a special Groundhog Day celebration. Keith plays a variety of stringed instruments and tells stories and jokes that will tickle your funny bone. Look him up at www.toadcreekmusic.com and join us for a raucous Groundhog day celebration.

Friendship, homemade soup, lunch, dessert and a program ~ Free!

Feel free to bring a dessert to share.

An informal sharing of Holy Communion is offered at the end of our time together for those who are interested.

Women's Retreat

April 22-24, 2016

**Trout Lake Retreats, Stroudsburg
Lavender Springs Spa: Where Women Rest in
God's Faithfulness**



Members, Friends, Family members are invited.

Cost: \$125 **(Collecting \$60 deposit now (due February 7, final payment due April 5.)**

Pay to "Union UCC" with memo "Women's Retreat."

Please mail or put in Barbara Carinci's mailbox.

Leaders: Pastor Kris and the Planning Team

Women's Day Connecting with Spirit: Meditation and Painting

**Connecting with Spirit: Meditation and
Painting Saturday, February 20th 2-4pm at
our church**

**Save the date and sign up with your payment
by February 7th. \$40 to "Union UCC"**

Leaders: Carrie Beleno, Spiritual Teacher and
Kristina Cole, Paint of Mind

Are you looking for a chance to reconnect with God and to stay grounded in the midst of life's joys and struggles? Carrie, one of our church members, will lead this seminar that will include guided meditation, discussion, Reiki, and prayer. Kristina Cole will guide us through creating our own painting that reflects our meditation time.

Watch for more info and a sample of the painting on facebook and email.

This is limited to 30 people, so don't wait to commit to this time for you and God.

And yes, Pastor Kris will provide snacks.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

All committees and groups must complete a use of facility form to schedule events or activities.

Please contact Barbara, Church Administrator, in the church office at 610-767-6961

or

administrator@unionucc.org for forms and room availability. Thank You!



Don Penrod is our Catch the Spirit recipient for February. He will be recognized on February 14, 2016 at the 10:30 am worship service.

Don grew up as a Catholic, attended a catholic school from K-4th grade, and was even an altar boy. In his mid -20's he felt a disconnect and was "a little lost in my faith journey." He met his future wife in his late twenties, and started coming to Union UCC. Eventually, he was married here by Pastor Kris, and he later became a member. Being a part of the church changed his life, "I found what I was missing...a chance to BELIEVE again and be a part of a welcoming and inviting community."

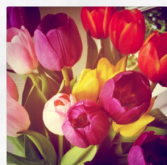
Don and his "beautiful wife," Sherry, of 18+ years, have two "beautiful daughters," Brianna, 25, and Brooke, 14. His parents live in Cocoa Beach, FL, and his in-laws are all local and members of Union UCC. Currently, he works for Grainger Industrial Supply, as a Commercial Account Manager covering Lancaster, Reading, and the Lehigh Valley.

Why does Don loves Union UCC? "Recurring theme...a chance to BELIEVE again. I got a chance to explore my faith and not feel guilty about it. This church is full of so many wonderful, kind, special, and talented people. I *want* to be a part of Union UCC and not that I *have* to go to church-that's a big difference. Thanks to our congregation for making this a special place."

In his spare time, Don enjoys coaching his daughter's soccer team, and training, mentoring and playing soccer and golf. He spent over six years on the Parkland Area Soccer Club Board, as well as their Field Coordinator. He is looking forward to spending some more time with his family and church family in 2016.

Don and Sherry taught Children's Church for two years. He's been on Consistory, the Leadership Planning Team (LPT), and currently on the Search Committee. Recently, he has agreed to lead the Financial Leadership Team/ Stewardship Committee. He also enjoys being a lay reader during worship. Don says that his favorite memories of church are the church picnics, "Because we get to come together as a church family. We enjoy our time together and have some fun."

Flower Plants for the Home Visitation Members and for the Sanctuary



This year we are pleased to offer Easter Lilies (\$8.75 each), 6 bloom Tulips and 3 bloom Hyacinths (\$7 each).

Please help by sponsoring a Flowering Plant for the Sanctuary.

You may pick this up after the 10:30 a.m. Easter Service on March 27th.

Let us share this Joy of the Easter season with our Home Visitation Members. Sponsor a Flowering Plant and assure them that we include them within our Church Family.

Please **print** your information on the form, enter the number of plants you are ordering, and place in the offering plate, with your payment (checks payable to Union U.C.C.) or mail to the church office by **Sunday, March 6, 2015.**

I would like to sponsor Flowering Plant(s)

FOR SANCTUARY

Lily (\$8.75) _____ Tulip (\$7.00) _____ Hyacinth (\$7.00) _____

FOR VISITATION MEMBER(S)

Lily (\$8.75) _____

Sponsor's Name: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Total amount enclosed is \$ _____

Envelope Number _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

I will pick up my plants after the 10:30am Easter worship service on March 27, 2016:
 (Please circle one) YES NO



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 9, 2016 ~ 6PM Supper
7-8PM Entertainment -
Scott Wagstaff, Ventriloquist

Menu: Pancakes (Gluten Free available), sausage, applesauce, and fastnachts.

FREE! - Donations accepted.

Hosted by: Fellowship Committee
Served by: Youth Group

Make your reservation by February 7th!
Return the bottom portion to the office
or call 610-767-6961.



SHROVE TUESDAY

Name _____

#Adults _____ #Children _____

#People Ordering Gluten Free Pancakes _____

Phone/Cell No. _____

I will donate one dozen fastnachts/doughnuts!

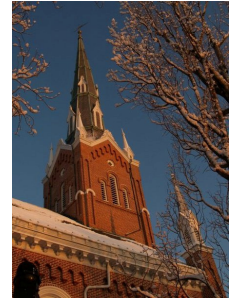
Hospital Info Update:

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.**

Property Committee

By Phil Wehr

Spring-like weather provided a snow free Christmas Eve and Christmas Day for the Lehigh Valley. So nice for everyone to attend church without the hassles or concerns of snow or ice. So nice for the church to have four greatly attended, spirit filled, candlelight services, with no



worries of winter weather. No heat was needed for Christmas Eve with all of the warm bodies inside- what a great night. PS... the air conditioners were on !! But it's okay to stay cool, even in the winter !!

While the Christmas decorations may now be down, and stored for another year, the spirit lives on and continues into this new year. Small projects continue around the property to keep everything up and running and in good working order, along with regular cleaning of the sanctuary and all of the floors and bathrooms around the building.

During the past month, the electricians and technical crews have been busy running wires, installing new boxes and technical equipment to improve the wi-fi service and internet service to all three floors of the building, excluding the sanctuary. This upgrade will provide for more Christian education opportunities, and social activities in the classrooms and main halls.

The property committee is also reviewing plans to install a hearing assist system in the sanctuary, which will be connected to the current sound system. This improvement will be a major help for many members or guests when attending services or events in the church sanctuary. More information to follow in coming months.

One of these days snow will be arriving, enjoy it when it comes, but just think, Spring is coming, just ask the groundhog.

Our Church Family in the News..

-**Kristen Howett** graduated in December from Indiana University of Pennsylvania Magna Cum Laude with a BS in Natural Science



Tales From the Road

By Rev. Dr. Patience Stevenson, Minister of Visitation

Did You Know?

Our members are so accomplished and have very rich histories. In upcoming articles I will be featuring a number of our seniors whom I have the privilege of visiting.

Dorothy Rabert learned to quilt at the age of 10 from her grandmother, Katie George Hoffman, and two aunts, Sadie George Baer, and Helen George Wetherhold. When Dorothy was growing up her grandmother and Aunt Helen always had a quilt in their living rooms or dining rooms. The quilting bees would of course be a very social time, and included homemade ice cream and baked goods. They would quilt for themselves and family members. Dorothy began helping to quilt outside of her home at the Grange Fair. She was then invited to help with the Union UCC/Lutheran quilters, where she quilted for 20 years. Although Dorothy quilted many quilts for others, she never quilted one for herself.

Dorothy helped her family harvest and prepare produce from her grandparents' farm for many of the church's Harvest Home Festivals. She helped her family to host many a Sunday lunch which often included the pastor. Dorothy is also known as the family historian, and an important historian for Union UCC.

Dorothy is now living at *At Home at Parkland, 4315 Washington Street, Schnecksville, PA 18078*. I know she would love to have you visit her or send her a card.

Country Sale-May 7th

It's time to start thinking about spring and yard sales again. Why not sell your items at our Country Sale!

Cost: \$20 donation per indoor/outdoor space Registration: Contact Linda Migliori 610-799-6160

We will be collecting donations of book, videos, puzzles to dropped on stage starting April 18 on the stage in Memorial Hall. Please do not drop off before that date.



By Annette Wilcox

Check us out on Facebook—
[facebook.com/neffspreschool](https://www.facebook.com/neffspreschool)

or on our website—
www.unionucc.org/preschool

2016 has started and the classrooms are busy learning about animals this month. Each week featured a different animal theme. We've been swinging through the jungle with the monkeys, down on the farm, and swimming in the ocean with the sharks and dolphins. The students have had a chance to make an ocean in a bottle and churn their own butter for snack. To celebrate learning about the letter "P", the students and staff will get cozy with a movie and popcorn for Pajama Day.

The Preschool will be holding an informational **Open House on February 9th** to kick off registration for the 2016-2017 school year. Join us from 6:30-8:00pm to learn more about our program.

Attention High School Seniors!

The Neffs UCC Preschool is offering a \$250 Scholarship to a graduating senior who plans on continuing their education. The senior must be a graduate of the preschool and submit an essay by March 1st. The essay should be 500 words or less in which the applicant tells about themselves, their future plans, and a preschool memory. Application forms are available in the church office, preschool office, and online.

WHERE SCHOOL MEMORIES BEGIN!

We offer rolling admissions with classes for 3, 4 and 5 year-olds
Curriculum aligned with Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards
Whole child focused: academic, social and emotional

Thank You from :

- The **Bethlehem Salvation Army** for generously supporting the Angel Tree program providing Christmas gifts for 75 local children.
- The **6th Street Shelter** for the donation of many hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, socks and more.
- The **Northern Lehigh Food Bank** for the donation of 250 five pound bags of potatoes for the annual Thanksgiving food distributions to our clients, and for the year round support of food, groceries, toiletries, and volunteer labor.

Advent Self Denial - A truly amazing collection of \$2,730 was raised to support the two selected mission organizations. This collection will be divided equally to :

The Guatemala Water and Health Clinic Project, supported by The Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ, commonly known as Los Amigos de Guatemala

Lehigh Conference of Churches Emergency Shelter at Alliance Hall in Allentown.

Both agencies will provide HOPE and LOVE to people in Guatemala and Allentown. What a great gift provided by the congregation of Union UCC in Neffs, PA. Praise God.

Global Ministries Sponsored Children

We continue to sponsor children through the Global Ministries Child Sponsorship Program of the United Church of Christ. Our current children are Tendai Magidhi (age 10) and Elizabeth Magidhi (age 15), who live with their grandmother in Zimbabwe, Africa.



Tendai



Elizabeth

Blanket Sunday– Feb. 14



Blanket the World with Love and warmth. Help people around the world with the purchase of **blankets which are \$5 each**, the more blankets bought, the more people to share in the love and

the warmth of the blanket.

Some 8,000 congregations and groups across the U.S. hold Blankets events for Church World Services, providing funds to help people in need around the world.

For over 60 years, CWS has worked in partnership with local communities to identify their needs and access the resources they need to build the foundation for a more viable future, including: Blankets, tents, food and other emergency supplies in the wake of a disaster, tools and seeds for refugees returning home to replant their fields, wells for families living in drought prone areas to provide clean, safe water to drink and to irrigate crops and gardens.

Please be generous and open your hearts to this great world-wide mission to spread Love and Warmth to all.



Adult Study

Friday Morning Adult Class

9:30am-11am – Room 5 (Basement)

Everyone is welcome at any time as your schedule allows.

Feb 5 Pastor Allan will lead Bible study: *“Beginnings of the Gospel Traditions”* using Bart Ehrman’s *“Making of the New Testament Canon”*

Feb 12 Pastor Allan will discuss *“The Earliest Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John”*

Feb 19 Pastor Allan will discuss *“Other Gospels: Gospel of Thomas and Gospel of Peter”*

Feb 26 Pastor Allan will discuss *“The Apocalypse of John”*

Sunday Morning Adult Class

9:15-10:15 - Room 5 (Basement)

Everyone is welcome at any time as your schedule allows.

Gifts of the Dark Wood by Eric Elnes.

Copies of the book will be available to purchase \$11, purchase is not required.

Led by Pastor Kris

This series explores the proposition that our best help on life’s journey often comes from the most unlikely and misunderstood of places: a place known famously, or infamously, as the Dark Wood.

February 7 The Gift of Failure

February 14 The Gift of Being Thunderstruck

February 21 The Gift of Lostness

February 28 The Gift of Temptation

Helping Hearts and Communion Ministers

Would you like to be a Helping Heart or Communion Minister? We are looking for additional people to serve in this ministry. Contact Rev. Patience or Pastor Kris with your questions or you interest.

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 March 10th at 7pm.**

Helping Meals: We are always looking for people who can make a meal for our families when they face a challenging time. If you can help, please contact **Lisa Rex at 484-225-5883.**

The pastors are also collecting donations of Weis and DiFiores Restaurant gift cards to assist families.

Sunday Sponsors:

Flower Basket (\$30), **Adult & Children’s Bulletins** (\$20, \$8) contact Phyllis Hamm at 610-349-0324 (leave a message or text).
Spread the Good News (\$20) contact- Tara Henninger, 610-767-6961 (secretary@unionucc.org)
Please note: we have discontinued Sign-Up Genius

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Every Tuesday 7-8:30PM room 5.



We are studying the life of Moses and the book of Exodus. You are invited to come learn new things and grow in faith. Contact Harry B. Burger 610-767-5344.

Thanks to our Office Helpers!

Tom & Linda Anderson, Donald & Janet Bachman, Madeline Bingell, Eunice Diehl, Teresa Dalrymple, Phyllis Hamm, Judy Hoffman, Eleanor & Ron Kleckner, Linda Migliori, Diana Miller, Barbara Panner, Linda & Wilbur Romig, Jill Schlosser, Jean & Stan Wieand, and Marianne Ulrich



Union UCC...in search of mission, vision and leadership

"If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves. But when they attend to what God reveals, they are most blessed." Proverbs 29:18 [MSG]

Thank you to the Leadership Planning Team, the Consistory, the Staff, Pastors and the entire congregation for your investment of time, talent and treasure this past year. We have followed the guidance of God's Spirit and relied on God's grace. On Sunday, February 7th, 2016, we will celebrate our ministry together and say "farewell."

A little over a year ago you called me to serve as your Intentional Interim Pastor and Consultant as you entered into a time of transition. You asked me to guide and assist you in developing healthy Christian leadership, learning to live together as the Body of Christ during times of change & challenge, discerning God's call and claiming your shared Christian mission, vision and values as you plan your future ministry & mission. All of this was to ensure you would be prepared to Search for, and Call, your next permanent Senior Pastor.

We have been led by God's Spirit through this time of transition. We have experienced the saving and redeeming grace of Christ. We have worked and prayed hard, trusted the process and grown together in faith. We have leaned on and learned from each other.

As we leave our time together, my prayer is that we will continue to focus on our own spiritual journeys and our own relationship with Jesus Christ; live the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, generosity and self-control; and remain true to Christ's radical gospel. As our paths diverge may we continue to catch glimpses of God's grace, reaffirming that we are resurrection people.

Peace,

Pastor Bill

Rev. A. William Metzger

Pint for Pint: Blood Drive and Soup Sale

Take care of others and we will take care of you. You donate a pint to the Miller-Keystone Blood Center and we'll give you a pint of delicious homemade soup. Sponsored by the Mission Committee, the Miller-Keystone Blood Center will be here on **Sunday, March 13** to take blood donations for use throughout the 21 local hospitals served by them. Our goal for Miller-Keystone is to get 30 blood donors in their five-hour visit (8am to 1pm). With a great worship attendance, dedicated church members, and community participation, Union UCC should be able to collect the maximum 42 blood donations, not just the 30 that are planned. In coordination, we are offering a Soup Sale on that same day. Soup sales are for take-out only and are open to all. There will be many varieties from which to choose. Quarts are \$6 and pints are \$4. Soup Sale proceeds and monetary donations will benefit Miller-Keystone Blood Center.

To make this a great event, please participate in any of the many ways possible: sign up to donate blood if you are able (visit giveapint.org to see if you qualify as a donor), buy a soup, or educate yourself on the life-saving gift of blood donation. **Call Susan Smith at (610) 366-7284 to sign up. Blood collection will be in Memorial Hall from 8 am until 1 pm, with appointments every 15 minutes.** If you are a regular blood donor, keep Sunday, March 13 in mind so that you can be eligible to donate here at Union UCC.






Worship Opportunities

Sunday, February 7, 2016

5th Sunday after Epiphany/Souper Bowl/Communion

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service

Sermon: Rev. Alan Miller, PNEC Minister

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Susan Rumble

10:30 - David Fleming

Greeters: Mark & Debbie Daluisio, Jim & Edie Fella

Acolytes: 8AM - Chase Misera

10:30AM - Karl Schmidt, Jr., Peyton Schlosser

Tuesday, February 9, 2016

Shrove Tuesday

6:00 pm Pancake and Sausage Supper

7-8 pm Entertainment by Scott Wagstaff, Ventriloquist

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Ash Wednesday/Communion

7:00pm Worship Service

Text: Matthew 14:22-33

Message: "Jesus Walks on Water"

Sermon: Rev. Kris Snyder-Samuelsan

Lay Reader: Doug Albert

Greeters: Carol Pope, Ron Snyder

Acolytes: Olivia Schuster, Sonya Shivok

Sunday, February 14, 2016

1st Sunday in Lent/Blanket Sunday

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service

Text: Matthew 28:16-20

Message: "How to Grow a Welcoming Church"

Sermon: Rev. Dr. Allan Kramer-Moyer

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Lucille Kuhns

10:30 - Elena Steidinger

Greeters: Nancy Jones, Eric Minnich, SueAnn Hregician

Acolytes: 8AM -

10:30AM - Olivia Schuster, Justin Trexler

Sunday, February 21, 2016

2nd Sunday in Lent

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service-Sunday Morning Alive

Text: Matthew 25:31-46

Message: "Seeing Christ in Others"

Sermon: The Mission Committee and Pastor Kris

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Leslie Thompson-Strack

10:30 - Donna Christman

Greeters: James Ricketts & Steph Schuster, Jeff & Marcey

Kroll

Acolytes: 8AM - Amanda Lane

Sunday, February 28, 2016

3rd Sunday in Lent

8:00am Heritage Service

10:30am Horizon Service

Sermon: Rev. David DeRemer, Guest Preacher

Lay Readers: 8:00 - Suzanne Schneider

10:30 - Harry Burger

Greeters: Vicki Mayk, Karen Wonderly

Acolytes: 8AM - Will Filipovits

10:30AM - Hannah Horvath, Ian Henninger



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:

February 7—Souper Bowl

February 14—Welcoming Committee

February 21—Mission Committee

February 28—Fellowship Committee

Book Club

Next book: "Neverhome: A novel" by Laird Hunt. We will

meet February 3 at 7pm in the Memory Room. For more info contact Kathi Charles kac4b@hotmail.com or 610-462-5551.





Financial & Attendance Reports

	<u>Operating Fund</u>	<u>Designated Funds</u>	<u>Grand Total All Funds</u>
7-1-2015	\$ 9,644.00	\$25,635.00	\$35,279.00
Income	\$236,998.00	\$24,158.00	\$261,156.00
Expenses	\$200,368.00	\$29,422.00	\$229,790.00
12-31-2015	\$46,274.00	\$20,371.00	\$66,645.00

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

<u>Date</u>	<u>Worship Service</u>		<u>CC/ Video/ Nursery</u>	<u>Total</u>	
	<u>8AM</u>	<u>10:30AM</u>			
December 6	63	244	CFW	307	
December 13	93	207	39	339	
December 20	103	233	48	384	
December 24	3p 323	5p 410	8pm 380	11pm 277	1390
December 27	NA	123	CFW	123	

TOTAL ATTENDANCE	
December <u>2014</u> – 2,682	December <u>2015</u> – 2,543
AVG ATTENDANCE	
December <u>2014</u> – 339	December <u>2015</u> - 288

Weddings

James Ricketts and Stephanie Schuster were united in marriage under the care of Union UCC on December 26, 2015.

Timothy Lorah and Melissa Binder were united in marriage under the care of Union UCC on January 16, 2016.

Death

Pastor Thomas's Mother

On December 24th, Doratha Thomas passed away after a fall in her home in Virginia. She was 100 years young. If you'd like to send a note to Pastor Thomas and his family you can send that to: Rev. Thomas Thomas, 2015 Jonagold Road, Allentown, PA 18104.

Join the Choir!

Practice Schedules:

Tuesday Nights—Youth

Cherubs (age 4-1st grade)— 6pm

Juniors (2nd-5th)—6:30pm

Middlers (6th-8th)—7:00pm

High School (9th-12th)—7:30pm

Sunday Mornings—Adults

Heritage Choir—7:15am

Horizon Choir—9:15am

UNION UCC CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Kris Snyder-Samuelson
Acting Senior Pastor
Cell Phone: 610-657-6007
assocpastor@unionucc.org

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

Rev. Dr. Patience Stevenson
Pastor of Visitation
Cell Phone: 610-248-5587
vispastor@unionucc.org

Rev. A. William Metzger
Pastoral Consultant
Renaissinc@aol.com

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
dirmusic@unionucc.org

Blake Hoppes
Organist/Accompanist
Blake.charger@gmail.com

Church Office:
610-767-6961
Fax: 610-767-7128

PO Box 66,
5550 Route 873
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. 31
Barbara Carinci	ext. 21
Tara Henninger	ext. 22
Kathy Bonsell	ext. 27
Mike Baer	ext. 26
Kitchen	ext. 30



Souper Bowl Sunday - Feb 7, 2016

The soup pots will be out early in mid-January to start collecting soup for the Northern Lehigh Food Bank. Help TACKLE HUNGER by buying a six pack of soup, or head for the goal posts with a case of 12 or 24 cans.



The Mission Committee encourages all members to get off the sidelines, get in the game and donate canned soup to feed families in the community. We need YOUR help to meet our GOAL to collect over 600 cans of soup. Cash donations will also be accepted.

Following the 10:30 worship, **the Welcoming Committee** will provide a tailgate luncheon of sandwiches, chili, pizza, wings and other assorted goodies.

Join in the fun on Super Bowl Sunday, Feb 7, 2016 and join Union UCC and thousands of churches around the country as we celebrate SOUPer Bowl Sunday.

TAILGATE PARTY

FEBRUARY 7, 2016 11:30 - 12:30PM

Welcome New Church Members to our Team! Everyone welcome

Menu includes: Subs, pizza, wings, chili, salads, snacks, birch beer, soda, please bring a dessert. The cost to attend is FREE.



Be sure to help the Mission Committee with their effort to help others by bringing a can of soup or cash donation.

Please make your lunch reservation by calling the office (610-767-

Lenten Self-denial

This year's offerings for Lenten Self-denial will be provided to Meals on Wheels of Lehigh County and Turning Point of Lehigh Valley. Both agencies provide vital services to families in the local communities. Please plan on supporting their mission work with your Lenten Self-denial donations. More information to follow in the March Newsletter.

Home Visitation Members Birthdays

Kathy Klimek—February 3

Good Shepherd #233
2855 Schoenersville Rd
Bethlehem, PA 18017



Priscilla Greiss—February 4

Fellowship Community
3728 Kauffman Court
Whitehall, PA 18052

Caroline Schillinger - February 6

Topton Home 114 Tower Crt
1 South Home Ave
Topton, PA 19562

Verna Traube - February 9

4740 Terrace Rd
Orefield, PA 18069

Muriel Hughes—February 10

Fellowship Manor/Room 215B
3000 Fellowship Dr.
Whitehall, PA 18052

Naomi Follweiler—February 15

4501 Homestead Dr.
Coplay, PA 18037

Franklin Strauss - February 15

6334 Lamar Court
Slatington, PA 18080-3022

Fay Cornell - February 29

Gracedale Nursing Home, Room 9
2 Gracedale Avenue
Nazareth, PA 18064

February 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 6:30pm Spiritually Fit 7:00pm Fellowship Committee; FOLG	2 9am Staff Mtg 10am Program Staff 12pm Golden Times 6pm Cherub Choir 6:30 Junior Choir 7pm Middler Choir 7:30pm High School Choir; Bible Study	3 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:30pm Spiritually Fit 7pm Church & Ministry; Book Club	4 7pm Chime Choir; Christian Ed	5 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study	6
8 6:30pm Spiritually Fit	9 6pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper	10 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:30pm Spiritually Fit 7pm Ash Wednesday Service	11 7pm Chime Choir; Search Committee	12 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	13
15 6:30pm Spiritually Fit 6:45pm Consistory	16 9am Staff Mtg 10am Program Staff 6-8pm Youth Choirs 7pm Financial Leaders 7:30pm Bible Study; Worship Cmt	17 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits; Preschool Board 6:15pm Lent dinner 6:30pm Spiritually Fit	18 7pm Chime Choir	19 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study 6pm CIA dinner	20 2:00pm Women's Retreat
22 6:30pm Spiritually Fit	23 9am Newsletter Mailing 10am VBS planning 6-8pm Youth Choirs 7:30pm Bible Study	24 9:30am Busy Bee Quilters 10am Knitwits 6:15pm Lent dinner 6:30pm Spiritually Fit 7pm Search Committee	25 7pm Chime Choir	26 9am Bulletin Prep 9:30am Bible Study	27 1pm Private party
29 6:30pm Spiritually Fit					

SUNDAYS

7 Communion 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Bible Study Horizon Singers Confirmation Class 10:30am Horizon Service-Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds; Souper Bowl Luncheon	14 Blanket Sunday 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Bible Study Horizon Singers Tech Committee 10:30am Horizon Service-Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds	21 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Bible Study Horizon Singers Confirmation Class 10:30am Horizon Service-Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds;	28 8am Heritage Service 9:15 - 10:15 am Holy Grounds Education Hour Bible Study Horizon Singers Confirmation Class 10:30am Horizon Service/Children's Church 11:30am Holy Grounds Youth Group Advisory
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