

Sundays, December 4, 11, and 18 at 8am and 10:30am

Friday, December 23 at 7pm, Christmas Eve Worship Candlelight and Communion

Saturday, December 24, Christmas Eve Worship

3pm Candlelight and Communion

5pm Children's Choir, No Communion

8pm Candlelight and Communion

Sunday, December 25 Christmas Day No 8am Worship, Only 10:30am Worship

Sunday, January 1 New Year's Day No 8am Worship, Only 10:30am Worship

Sunday, January 8 8am and 10:30am Worship with Communion, Young Adult Sunday

Pick up a copy of the book *Everything Is Sacred* for inspirational daily readings.

Copies are in the lobby on Sundays or in the bin on the South side entrance during the week.

Sunday, November 27th, 2022
8:00am and 10:30am Worship
Advent 1: Sacred Time
Holy Communion

GUESTS, Welcome to our faith community here at Union UCC. To learn more about us please visit our website at www.unionucc.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/unionneffs.

Please complete the Welcome Card in the racks in front of you and hand it in with your offering or give it to a pastor. This is a good way to let us know you're here.

One of our core values as a church is extravagant welcome and hospitality. We believe in God's inclusive love. No matter who you are or where you on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Lay Reader: 8:00 Ron Pope, 10:30 Brynn Buskirk

Ushers: 8:00 Cliff James, Carol James

10:30 Carrington Smith, Jim Lane, Jason Klinger, Susan Smith, Al Stubbmann, Karen Misera, Claire Kern, Gene Thrash

Sound: Doug Albert

***Please stand in body or spirit.**

Gathering Music
Little Drummer Boy Katherine K. David
Blake Hoppes

Reflecting the Sacred

The shiny additions to our Advent and Christmas visuals remind us that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we will remember the call to shine with this holy light.

Welcome

When you arrived here this morning, you received a cotton ball with olive oil on it. For those of you worshiping with us at home, please take a moment to grab a little olive oil from the kitchen or some lotion from your bathroom cabinet.

Online worshipers – you might like to have a candle nearby to light.

Crossing the Threshold

Leader: The Christmas season is a time when the juxtaposition of the sacred and secular feels sometimes blatantly opposed, and sometimes quite blurred. The word "sacred" points to something dedicated as "holy" and "set apart." This year, you are invited to a spiritual journey of seeing ALL things pregnant with the Holy. What could our experience of the Advent and Christmas season be like if we lived it imagining that everything is reflecting the sacred?

Leader: This year as we approach Christmas, what if we saw the presence of the holy in all that has been, is, and always will be—right here—reflected in and through everything and everyone around us? I want to invite us to spend some quiet time at the beginning of every one of our Advent and Christmas worship experiences to soften our focus on life. To blur the hard edges of our lives. To see the whole picture with our hearts. To train our hearts to love as God loves... with an all-encompassing compassion. To look at life through the reflections of the sacred.

I invite you to get comfortable where you are sitting. I invite you to open your hands upward in your lap. Close your eyes if you are comfortable doing so and take a deep, intentional breath in and out. If it is difficult to get your mind to quiet down, if you are making shopping lists in there, it's OK. Don't judge it... just take another breath and "thank and excuse" for just a moment the tasks that might be popping up on the to-do list in your brain. That's it. Take time to settle in.

Bring to your mind's eye—to your memory and imagination—a time of day that you love. Is there a moment in your day where you get to catch a breath in some alone time? Or is it that you love the moment you see your kids after school? Or perhaps it is cooking in your kitchen or watering plants or some other simple, ordinary, moment. As you see this scene, put it in slow motion. Now imagine particles of light showering slowly upon it. Let this reflection of light be an anointing of hope for seeing more and more of life through the lens of the Sacred. Continue to just breathe, listen, and see with your heart.

SOLO or CHOIR:
Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.

And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.

Take one more deep breath and open your eyes slowly.

Readers:

8:00 Ron and Carol Pope

10:30 Steve, Jen, Savannah, Jocelyn, and Juliette Kareha

Please repeat after me [us]:

We pray for Hope this day.
We pray for Hope this day.

We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.
We open to see the Sacred reflected in all things.

We open to see each moment
We open to see each moment

as a gift of holy presence.
as a gift of holy presence.

This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,
This is the gift of the Christ Mystery,

lighting the way to hope.
lighting the way to hope.

ALL (sung):
Upon this moment,
upon this people,
upon this place,
the holy comes.
And sacred knowing
brings sacred being
for sacred doing of God's plan.

Prayer

Leader: Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Hope,
we give you thanks for this holy moment together.

As we take in the hope you offer,
may we be a reflection of your light,
expanding the sacred time of "right now"
into the sacred time of "always and for all time."
Amen.

Sharing God's Light

Leader: One of our core values as God's church here in
Neffs is extravagant welcome.

So repeat after me - No matter who you are or where you
are on life's journey,

**ALL: No matter who you are or where you are on life's
journey,**

Leader: you are welcome here.

ALL: You are welcome here.

Leader: Please stand in body or spirit to greet each other
and to share God's light with one another.

We send our love and light to those watching and
listening at home or during the week.

***Opening Hymn #122** Come, O Long-Expected Jesus
(Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal)

**1. Come, O long expected Jesus,
born to set all people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
grant us your true liberty.**

**2. Israel's strength and consolation,
hope to all the earth impart;
Dear desire of every nation,
enter every longing heart.**

**3. Born all people to deliver,
born a child, you came to reign!**

**Born to rule on earth forever,
come be known to us again.**

**4. By your own eternal Spirit,
come to claim us as your own;
By your all sufficient merit,
let us share your cross and crown.**

Please be seated.

Refracting the Sacred

Leader: As light passes through a medium, it can be redirected in ways that make its brilliance more visible, as in a prism. As we encounter the message today, we see the world and our own lives and loved ones in a different light, one that invites us to know more deeply the sacred nature of all things.

MUSIC OFFERING

8:00 Heritage Choir: When Will We See the Little One?

Sally K. Albrecht & Jay Althouse

10:30 Kids Choir: Christmas Everyday LifeKids

It's Christmas Northpoint Kids

10:30 Worship – Time for Children

Education Hour for All Ages – 9:15-10:15am

**Children's Church – during 10:30am Worship for
ages 3-grade 5.**

Ms. Tiffany would like to invite children to join her and her volunteers for Sunday School at 9:15 and Children's Church during 10:30am service.

**TODAY: Pastors invite children forward for a Children's
Time and then they leave with Ms. Tiffany for a time
designed just for them!**

Children will be in the basement and will return before

worship is over. If worship ends early, parents are welcome to meet their children downstairs.

Children's Time

All: (Sung)

We reflect a sacred light,

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

Shining through the darkest night.

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

Like the shining stars above,

Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la.

We can beam God's light and love,

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la.

Introduction to Scripture

Reader: The busy-ness of the holiday season can overrun the sense of the sacred. The irony is that setting apart time for connection with the sacred gets pushed aside in order to create the trappings of what is supposed to be the season of celebrating the presence of the Holy! We will begin our Advent journey toward Christmas by emphasizing the gift of being awake to the "now"... the gift of sacred time with God, with each other, and with those in need of hope.

First Reading

Romans 13: 11-14 (The Message)

Reader: Make sure that you don't get so absorbed and exhausted in taking care of all your day-by-day obligations that you lose track of the time and doze off, oblivious to God. The night is about over, dawn is about to break. Be up and awake to what God is doing! God is putting the finishing touches on the salvation work he began when we first believed. We can't afford to waste a minute, must not squander these precious daylight hours in frivolity and indulgence, in sleeping around and dissipation, in bickering and grabbing everything in sight. Get out of bed and get

dressed! Don't loiter and linger, waiting until the very last minute. Dress yourselves in Christ, and be up and about!

Second Reading

Matthew 24: 36-44 (NRSVUE)

Reader: But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

The Message

Sacred Time

Pastor Kris

Refilling the Sacred

Leader: We are wells of the sacred. God's presence is poured into creation in a never-ending flow of love. We enter a time of prayer that invites us to be refilled in ways that can help us pour out our love throughout the week. All we must do in this moment is open our hearts to the Holy One.

Prayers

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

Bob McGee

Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el,
5 His Name is Called Em - man - u - el;
9 God with us, re - vealed in us;
13 His name is called Em - man - u - el.

The musical score is written in 4/4 time on a single treble clef staff. It consists of four lines of music. The first line has two measures of music with lyrics 'Em - man - u - el, Em - man - u - el,'. The second line starts at measure 5 and has two measures with lyrics 'His Name is Called Em - man - u - el;'. The third line starts at measure 9 and has two measures with lyrics 'God with us, re - vealed in us;'. The fourth line starts at measure 13 and has two measures with lyrics 'His name is called Em - man - u - el.'.

**ALL: (Spoken) Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise.
(St. Patrick's Prayer)**

Repeat ALL Singing: Emmanuel, Emmanuel

The LORD'S PRAYER

**ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

News about the Ministry and Mission of God's Church

Offering Prayer

Prayer

God of birthing new life into the world and our lives, we bring our gifts to you and to this church and community: gifts of heart, spirit, energy, love, time, resources, dreams, hopes, passion, compassion, meaning and purpose, and faith. We come to the manger and we bow, asking for your guidance and blessing and these gifts and on us. Deepen our commitment to you and to each other. Pour your light on these gifts, on us, and on your church and all people we pray. Amen.

Offering

Thank you for the many ways in which you support God's work and God's people.

CHRISTMAS MISSION OFFERING

Please share your financial support by using the Christmas Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or blank envelope marked - Christmas Mission, or donate online at <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/ChristmasMission>.

The Allentown Rescue Mission For more than a century, the Allentown Rescue Mission has addressed the changing face of homelessness, tackling the root causes of homelessness, and helping to end homelessness one life at a time throughout the Lehigh Valley. Thousands have come to their shelter receiving life changing help. Their shelter has been a place where men have begun to experience restoration.

The Laurel House is part of the Thistle Farms and Bloom community which provides sanctuary and a continuum of care to heal, empower, and employ women survivors of sex trafficking. This new location in Allentown will support pregnant survivors with 2 years of safety while they heal, deliver their child, attend parenting classes, and receive mentoring and vocational training in order to live independently.

Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC OFFERING ENVELOPES. If you can't attend worship, you can mail your envelopes to the church. The church address is on one side, just add a stamp.

ELECTRONIC GIVING. Choose to give a repetitive contribution on a regular basis (i.e weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly), or make single contributions whenever you desire in an amount of your choice. Electronic contributions are initiated from Union UCC's website (UnionUCC.org). Click on 'giving', then on 'Ways to Give' and follow the prompts. Feel free to contact John Harting 610-799-2508) or Don Penrod (610-398-2654) to answer your questions or demonstrate the process.

MOBILE GIVING. If you would like to give on the go, Vanco, the company that processes our e-giving transactions, has a mobile app that allows you to do so. Open your app search screen, search under "Vanco Mobile Faith \Engagement" and follow the prompts.

AMAZON SMILE. Donate to Union UCC, Neffs (Search by zip code 18065) while you shop <https://smile.amazon.com>

10:30 Music Offering
Go Tell It on the Mountain Spiritual
Blake Hoppes

***Offering Response**

Please stand in body or spirit.

(Sung to the tune of "What Child Is This")

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise God all creatures here below

Praise God all heavens and the earth

reflecting the sacred story.

**This, this is Christ the One
who mirrors hope for all of us.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Word of time eternal.**

HOLY COMMUNION

Leader: Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace. You will be served in your seats.

Wait to eat and drink until the Pastor invites you to do so.

A non-gluten option with juice is available in a prepackaged container on the bread tray.

Both red wine and white grape juice are on the tray of cups. Please choose either.

Invitation

Leader: Christ invites all to his table, for he is the One who is reflected in all things and unites all things. There is a place for you. This Cosmic Banquet of hope, love, joy, peace, and light is set for a hungry and hurting world. When we take in and take on Christ, we are the Body of Christ sent forth into the world to lay this banquet wherever we find ourselves. Let us open ourselves so that our hearts might be filled completely.

Great Thanksgiving

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

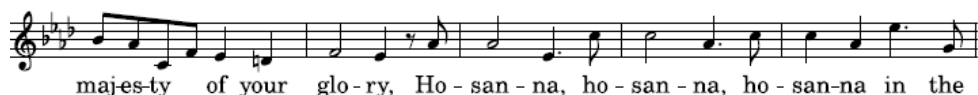
Leader: It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Word of God, Logos from the beginning.

You made us reflective of your image
and set us ablaze with the breath of life.

When we turned away, and our love dulled,
your love remained as light for our lives.

You delivered us from captivity,
made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.

And so,
with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Leader: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
Your Spirit anointed him
to preach good news to the poor,
to proclaim release to the captives
and recovering of sight to the blind,
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
and to announce that the time had come
when you would save your people.
He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners.

A reflection of this purpose,
and anointed as his disciples,
we are his Body in the world—
the Body of Christ.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.”

Leader: Anoint this community with your Holy Spirit,
and pour out your Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them a reflection of your life and love,
so that we may be for the world a Christ Mirror,
radiating and multiplying this life and love in the world.
Amen.

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE

L: The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.

L: The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

L: The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING THE MEAL

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.

You will be served in your seats.

Wait to eat and drink until the

Pastor invites you to do so.

A non-gluten option with juice is available in a prepackaged container on the bread tray.

Both red wine and white grape juice are on the tray of cups. Please choose either.

THE BREAD

L: Take and eat, the body of Christ, broken for you.

HYMN #330 Let Us Break Bread Together (New Century Hymnal, black)

1. Let us break bread together on our knees

Let us break bread together on our knees

When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,

My God have mercy on me

2. Let us drink wine together on our knees

Let us drink wine together on our knees

When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,

My God have mercy on me

3. Let us praise God together on our knees

**Let us praise God together on our knees
When I fall on my knees with my face to the rising sun,
My God have mercy on me.**

THE CUP

L: Take and drink, this is the cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you.

**MUSIC OFFERING Pastor Kris with Blake Hoppes
Come to the Table**

We all start on the outside
The outside looking in
This is where grace begins
We were hungry, we were thirsty
With nothing left to give
Oh the shape that we were in
Just when all hope seemed lost
Love opened the door for us

CHORUS:

He said come to the table
Come join the sinners who have been redeemed
Take your place beside the Savior
Sit down and be set free
Come to the table

Come meet this motley crew of misfits
These liars and these thieves
There's no one unwelcome here
So that sin and shame that you brought with you
You can leave it at the door
Let mercy draw you near

To the thief and to the doubter
To the hero and the coward
To the prisoner and the soldier
To the young and to the older

All who hunger, all who thirst
All the last and all the first
All the paupers and the princes
All who fail you've been forgiven
All who dream and all who suffer
All who loved and lost another
All the chained and all the free
All who follow, all who lead
Anyone who's been let down
All the lost you have been found
All who have been labeled right or wrong
To everyone who hears this song

The Blessing

L: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,
keep and preserve you unto eternal life.

COLLECTING OF CUPS

HYMN #166 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (Gold Hymnal, Hymns for the Family of God)

**1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing worldly minded,
For with blessing in His hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand.**

**2. Kind of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords in human nature,
In the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.**

3. At His feet with six-winged seraph;

**Cherubim with watchful eye,
Veil their faces to His Presence,
As with ceaseless voice thy cry,
“Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord most high!”**

Reframing the Sacred

Leader: We too often think that something “sacred” is far away and not available to us. This Advent season, we are “reframing” the way we recognize the sacred reflected all around and through us. As we prepare to move into the world, we begin to reframe our view of the world and our circumstances, illuminating new ways of being the Christ (Anointed One) tangibly present.

Anointed to Sacred Time

When you arrived here this morning, you received a cotton ball with olive oil on it. For those of you worshipping with us at home, please take a moment to grab a little olive oil from the kitchen or some lotion from your bathroom cabinet.

Leader: “Christ” means “anointed one.” Anointing with oil has long been a sacred sign of holiness. The Christ is reflected in and through all things, including Sacred Time. This week, you are invited to take a bit of oil or lotion and touch it to your forehead or the back of your hand one time each day when you set aside some Sacred Time for awe and wonder.

Perhaps it will be each morning as you get ready and you stop for a moment and say a prayer of gratitude. Perhaps it will be during a time of devotional reading or journaling. Perhaps it will be in your car before you head home on your commute from work. Or perhaps you will do this with your family just before bedtime. The way you set aside time is up to you. Repeating the same time frame each day is helpful to establish a rhythm. The

anointing is a physical way to help us remember that we are One with Christ, the Anointed, and with each other and all of creation.

Let's start by opening the bag and anointing ourselves now. Inviting God to be with on this advent journey of reflecting the sacred.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS

As you go about your days this week, how will you look for and reflect the sacred?

Send us a picture and we will share it on Facebook and Instagram.

Stop by our photo mirror in the lobby to take your Reflecting the Sacred picture and send it to us too! Send your pictures to pastorkayli@unionucc.org or Marissa at administrator@unionucc.org.

Benediction

Leader: When you see lights twinkle,
when you catch a reflection in a mirror,
when you notice the sunlight dancing on a surface
or a nightlight glowing in the darkness,
let these be signs that the Christ Light is revealed
again and again in and through this world.

Know that your brilliant presence
is pouring more hope into a weary world.
God loved us by becoming us.
This means you are already
reflecting the sacred.

In the name of the Creator, Christ, and Spirit of Hope.
Amen.

***Closing Hymn #193 O Come, All Ye Faithful (Gold Hymnal, Hymns for the Family of God)**

**1. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels;**

**O come let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord.**

**2. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;**

**O come let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord.**

**3. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
O Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;**

**O come let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ, the Lord.**

Postlude

**Christmastime Michael W. Smith
Blake Hoppes**

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$8,503.00
Calendar Year 2022 (Jan-Oct.)	\$ 309,414.00
Calendar Year 2021 (Jan-Oct.)	\$ 302,292.00
Change from Last Year	2.4%
Budget FY 2022 (July 2022-June 23)	\$ 131,000.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July 2022-June 23)	\$ 112,648.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-14.0%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week		
	In person	Online
8:00 am	28	
10:30 am	143	
Education Hour	10	

2022 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	40bs, \$
Total YTD:	5,989 lbs, \$880

Presentations to the Glory of God

Spread the Good News :

Be a sponsor for \$20, send to Union UCC through your offering envelope or online marked Spread the Good News or \$8 for Children's Bulletin. Contact Marissa to sign up for a certain date or to sponsor in honor or memory of someone.

CCLI LICENSE # 1523377 / Streaming # 20407732

One License #A714125 / Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from *ONE LICENSE*, License #A714125