

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, December 4th, 2022 8:00am and 10:30am Worship Advent 2: Sacred People

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 are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Lay Reader: 8:00 Sue Steinmann, 10:30 Lucille Kuhns

Ushers: 8:00 Phil Wehr, Ron Pope

10:30 Aften Hamm, Scott Nagle, Tami Herzog Wassum, Suzanne Lorah, Pat Warmkessel, Don Penrod, Jennifer Haley, Suzanne Schneider

Sound: Patrick Sorg

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

Gathering Music
Emmanuel with O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Arr. Joel Raney
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 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.

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

Crossing the Threshold

Leader: In our Advent series this year, we are slowing things down at the beginning of our worship. It is often such a full time of year, and so as we make it our purpose to see Christ reflected around us, we intentionally create a time of slow motion to train our hearts to see more deeply. Last week, we imagined Sacred Time—moments in which the Light of Hope is mirrored in more dazzling ways. Today we are going to turn on the portrait settings in our imagination so we might focus more

clearly on the Light of Love projecting itself as Christ in the people around us, and in and through us.

I invite you to get comfortable where you are sitting, perhaps placing both of your feet on the floor. 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 have many things vying for your attention, 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 imagination—a very familiar person's face that you love. What is it about them that warms your heart? Imagine particles of light emanating from them, and let your memory move to an encounter when you felt this love and light extended from them to you. Now imagine the refracted light showering them, as if a prism has just lit up the surface of the walls and their own skin. As you see this scene, let their face fade and change, and in their place for just a moment see someone you struggle to love, or someone you've seen but do not know well. If you can, let the same reflection of light emanate and shower this person. Let it be an anointing of love on this person, made possible because the Christ light is the gift we all have to give, whether we feel able to or not. 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. As you are ready, I invite you to stand in body or spirit and face the back as the Light of Love comes into our midst. For those worshipping online, you are invited to light your first and second candle.

Readers:

8:00 Sue Steinmann

10:30 Eric Minnich, Raegan, Hannah, and Ryleigh

Please repeat after me [us]:

We pray for Love this day.

We pray for Love 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 person

We open to see each person

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 love.

lighting the way to love.

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

Living God, Christ Mystery, Spirit of Love,
we give you thanks for this holy gathering of Beloveds.

As we take in the love you offer,
may we be a reflection of your light,
expanding the sacred presence you have promised
into the sacred presence we can offer.

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 #169 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**
(Gold Hymnal, Hymns for the Family of God)

**1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.**

**2. O come, Thou Day spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine Advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.**

**3. O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
And order all things, far and nigh;**

**To us the path of knowledge show,
And cause us in her ways to go.**

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.

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: When we look through the lens of the sacred, we prepare our senses to recognize the holy in all people—to come to know them in a “steadfast and encouraging” way. Our world is crying out for harmony, and being able to see the Christ reflected in each other makes a path for this to be accomplished. We are inspired this week to see our own walk upon this earth as part of the call to be sacred people who usher in the presence of love. Hear this first reading:

First Reading

Romans Romans 15: 4-13 (NRSVUE)

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles
and sing praises to your name”;
and again he says,
“Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”;
and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;
and again Isaiah says,
“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the gentiles;
in him the gentiles shall hope.”

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Music Offering
8:00 Heritage Choir
10:30 Horizon Choir
Another Christmas Larry Shackley

The Message

Sacred People Susan Glosan, Member and Seminarian at Moravian Seminary

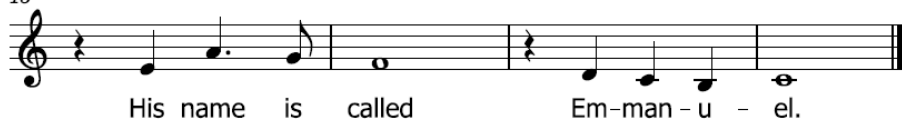
Refilling the Sacred

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;



**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

Guest Speaker: Vickie Nisbet from Laurel House and Bloom

Prayer

God of birthing new life into the world and our lives, we bring our gifts to you and to this church and communi-

ty: 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

**O Holy Night Adolphe Adam
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 Love for all of us.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
the Word of time eternal.**

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 People

[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.]

I hope you had the opportunity last week to let the act of anointing with oil or lotion ritualize the marking of meaningful moments... of seeing Time as Sacred. As we consider Sacred People this week, I want to invite you to use the oil or lotion in a couple of different ways, of course whatever you are comfortable with. Each morning as you look in the mirror or while getting ready for your day, consider anointing yourself as you remember that you are a reflection of the sacred. If you live with others and they are comfortable with it, take one point during the week to anoint one another and to celebrate the ways that you reflect the sacred to each other. And—this is the harder one—whenever you

encounter someone that you just cannot yet see their reflection as sacred—either in person or in the news, or other situation—just take a moment in your imagination to envision the anointing, or the emanating light like in our opening contemplative time, to cover them and pray a little prayer for Christ to open a way to get through them and open your eyes to see them in a different way eventually.

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 love 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.

Please stand.

***Closing Hymn #184 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (Gold Hymnal, Hymns for the Family of God)**

**1. Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King:
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King"**

**2. Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in the time behold Him come,
Offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God head see;
Hail th'incarnate Deity;
Pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, " Glory to the new born King."**

**3. Hail the heaven born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings,
Risen with healing In His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no More may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, " Glory to the new born King."**

Postlude

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentleman Traditional
Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$7,968.00
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 -Oct 22)	\$ 131,000.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July 2022-Oct 22)	\$ 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	44	122
10:30 am	133	167
Education Hour		

2022 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	bs, \$50
Total YTD:	5,989 lbs, \$930

Christmas Mission to date: \$100

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.

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