

## December and Christmas Eve Worship at Union UCC

The gift of being present...

Sunday Worship 8am and 10:30am in church and online

**December 3 Communion, 1st Sunday of Advent**

**December 10 2nd Sunday of Advent**

**Parkland Chorale Concert Sunday, December 10 at 7pm**

**December 17 3rd Sunday of Advent**

**Friday, Dec 22 Christmas Eve Eve Eve Worship at 7pm**

**Carols, Candles, Communion**

**December 24 - No Morning Services**

**Sunday, Dec 24 Christmas Eve Worship**

**3pm Carols, Candles, & Communion**

**5pm Carols & Candles**

**8pm Carols, Candles, & Communion**

**December 31 10:30am Worship Only**

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### GOD FIRST WEDNESDAYS

Wednesday, Dec 6

5:30-7:30pm

5:30-6:30pm Supper

Menu: Make your own Sub, bring Christmas

Cookies to Share

6:00-6:30 Children's Choir with Blake

(All kids are welcome but not required.) Non Choir kids hang with Ms. Tiffany and families.

6:30-7:15 Kids with Ms. Tiffany (Parents can join or go with adults.)

Youth Group with Pastor Kayli

Adults with Pastor Kris

7:15-7:30 Worship together

Sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080E4CAB823A71A7-46048646-godfirst>  
Or email/text a staff member. Do your best to sign up - but if you miss signing up, just come.

**Future Dates - Feb 7, March 6, May 1 (No Jan or April)**  
**Putting God First on First Wednesdays**

Parkland High School presents...

## PARKLAND CHORALE

Winter  
Concert

a night of choral singing  
and holiday cheer

10<sup>th</sup>

SUNDAY, DECEMBER

7:00PM

Union United Church of Christ  
5550 Route 873 • Neffs, PA

Free Admission | Donations Accepted

## BREATHE

Catch your breath with this new and unique time of evening prayer, reflection, quiet, and music. This monthly gathering on Tuesday nights will give you time to rediscover calm and peace.

7pm-8pm on Tuesdays in the Sanctuary

December 19

Led by Pastor Kris, Roni Gerry, and Carrie Beleno



### UNION UCC: RELEVANT, ENGAGED, and GROWING

Our Steering Without Oars group has been meeting since May 2022. They were the first to step into our boat! In October 2022 we invited 40 more leaders in our church to join us and formed the Leadership Planning Team. We have been meeting almost monthly looking at and creating a vision for God's ministry and mission at Union. In June 2023 we presented all of our work to Consistory who agreed to partner with us in our next steps.

**Thank you to everyone who joined us at the congregational gatherings. Your participation and feedback is so helpful as we discern God's path for us here at Union.**

**We looked at the results from our miracle question: If we could flip a switch and a miracle would occur at Union where our dreams and God's dream would come true for God's church here what task, initiative, or programs should we be doing for the next 1-3 years? No limitations!**

**We had over 2 pages of response and the 4 top initiatives are:**

**Memorial Hall Renovation, Mental Health Ministry, Youth Safe Space, Van**  
**Your feedback confirmed our call to work on these initiatives and affirmed our core values of extravagant welcome, spiritual growth, and being open and affirming.**  
**Watch for more info on stepping out of the boat together with Jesus!**

Pastor Kris, Pastor Kayli, Consistory Officers: Eric Minnich, Don Penrod, Janice Metzger, Marianne Kitzmiller and the LPT/Consistory



### **INFORMATION FORM AND SURVEY**

**Second letters were sent to those who have not yet responded to our information form that was mailed to all members in June. This form includes letting us know about your membership status and offers a chance for you to participate in a survey.**

**Please respond by November 26, 2023 and complete the form either by using the online link provided or by completing a paper copy and returning it to the church.**

**If you do not want to complete the survey portion that's fine, but please complete the information part of the form and check off your membership status.**

**Here's the online link to complete it: <https://forms.gle/JEZM4v4EcZ29EktMA>**

**Paper copies are available in the lobby on Sundays or you can contact the church office for additional paper copies to be mailed to you. Thank you for your help.**

### **Sanctuary Updates to Sound and Video** This has been a big year of upgrades.

- We added a new camera in the sanctuary for our online worship experience. It's been a huge improvement both in sound and video quality.
- The sanctuary sound system was also reviewed and refreshed, adding a new wireless microphone system.
- The outdoor portable system for the grove was overhauled with new speakers and a new mixer. The old sanctuary wireless microphone system will be used for outdoor worship.
- In October two flat screens will be installed in the sanctuary so that we can add to all that we do to make worship creative, relevant, and meaningful. This will allow us to project announcements, pictures, videos, and to interact with our online community in new ways.

**We couldn't do these things without the support of the Larry Wotring Estate, the Memorial Fund – in memory of Larry Pruneski, Phil & Julie Wehr Music Gift, Selig Electric, Entertainment Services Group (Mike and Nate), Jeff and Ronnie Herbine, Ed Normann, Phil Wehr, Pastor Kayli, and our Sound Team. THANK YOU!**

**See Pastor Kris or Pastor Kayli if you are interested in being a Digital Host on Sunday mornings. You'll get to help with the camera and interact with our online community during worship.**





**Lights in the Grove**  
**Saturday, December 2nd**  
**3-5pm**  
**Raindate, Sunday, December 3rd**

- CRAFTS FOR EVERYONE
- HOT CHOCOLATE AND SNACKS
- CHRISTMAS MUSIC
- SANTA! BRING YOUR LETTER OR WRITE ONE HERE.

ENJOY THE LIGHTS THROUGHOUT DECEMBER

*Union UCC*  
*5550 Route 873 Neffs*

SPONSORS LARRY, PHIL, AND JULIE WEHR  
 LIGHTS BY CHRISTMAS DECOR

FREE ADMISSION  
 DONATE HATS,  
 GLOVES,  
 SCARVES FOR  
 THE 6TH ST  
 SHELTER

### Adult Faith Formation Classes with Pastor Kris

**Fridays from 9:30 to 11am- Dec 1, 8, 15**

**Sundays from 9:15 to 10:15am – Dec 3, 10, 17**

**No Class Dec 22/24, Dec 29/31, Jan 5/7**

**Right Here, Right Now by Amy G. Oden** – This book will compliment the worship theme on Sundays for advent as we look at the gift of being present. We will learn about the practice of Christian mindfulness as well as develop our own practices. This season, we are invited to be the gift of presence for our loved ones, for our communities, for those who need it most.

**If you're unable to join us but want to read the books, there are copies available on the table in the lobby or contact Pastor Kris.**

**Note:** In addition to these gatherings there is an adult group that meets on God First Wednesdays on the first Wednesday of the month. The night starts with supper (you can join or skip) at 5:30 with small groups starting at 6:30-7:30pm. See more detailed post. Dates: Dec 6, Feb 7, March 6, May 1 (No Jan or April).

**Have you wanted to learn about other religions?** Pastor Kris is organizing various trips to visit other places of worship. RSVP to her if you are interested in joining her, everyone is welcome. Watch for additional dates and places.

**Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> Congregation Keneseth Israel** (A Jewish Community)  
 2227 W Chew St. Allentown, PA 18104 (near Muhlenberg) <https://www.kilv.org/>

Arrive there at 6:15 for an introduction to Judaism and to learn about the service, 7:30 service, followed by snacks. RSPV to Pastor Kris no later than Sunday, Dec 3.

### STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFTS

In the tradition of giving gifts to friends and loved ones, our church has 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 Donna Christman at 5820 PA Rte 873, Slatington, PA 18080 and mail to her at no later than Sunday, Dec 17.

You may also place it in the Church and Ministry mailbox near the church office. Any questions, email Donna at [dec12221@hotmail.com](mailto:dec12221@hotmail.com).  
 Thank you.

# Golden Times

Golden Times is a gathering for our senior adults. Everyone is welcome, including friends. We start at 12noon with lunch (often soup, salad, and a sandwich) and then have a program until about 1:30pm. There is no charge to attend. Your support of the budget and the Funds of Lasting Gifts provides the funds. Contact the church office if you'd like to receive post card mailing reminders. We also collect monthly items for the Northern Lehigh Food Bank.

Upcoming dates: 12/5 (No January)

## Poinsettia Order Form

DEADLINE FOR ORDERING IS: SUNDAY DECEMBER 10, 2023

\$8.00 EACH

I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR \_\_\_\_\_ PLANTS FOR THE HOME BOUND

I WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR \_\_\_\_\_ PLANTS FOR THE SANCTUARY.

I WILL PICK UP MY PLANT AFTER A CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE \_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_ NO

ENVELOPE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ SPONSOR'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_





November is all about gratitude and thankful does not begin to express how I feel about the opportunity I have had to be the director of the preschool. In my 9 years there have been over 400 students in my care, and each one came with a family that I had the pleasure to get to know. I have had 16 different staff members, 9 preschool board members and multiple church staff that I am grateful to have called both colleagues and friends. Therefore, it is with sadness that I announce my retirement from the director position at the end of this school year. We will begin searching for my replacement in January, and I am confident that I leave the preschool in capable hands and that it will only continue to grow and get better each year.

Thank you for all of the support,  
Annette

A sampling of this month's art work:




**Salvation Army  
Angel Tree**

**In Memorial Hall/Coffee Hour**  
**Grab a tag and shop for child**  
**and share**  
**your Christmas spirit.**  
**UNWRAPPED GIFTS due**  
**December 10**





# FAITH FORMATION

FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Contact: Tiffany Lakatosh

Email: [dired@unionucc.org](mailto:dired@unionucc.org)



JOIN US FOR LIGHTS IN THE GROVE

DECEMBER 2ND 3-5PM

AND JOIN US FOR GOD FIRST

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6TH

5:30-7:30PM

## LET'S GET INTO THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT!



Families are invited to join Ms. Tiffany on December 3rd after 10:30 service to have some fun and decorate the foyer of the church.

## Merry Grinchmas Christmas Celebration December 17th at 9:15am



Children age 3 to 7th grade and their parents/guardians are invited to join us!

Everyone is invited to wear their pajamas to this event.

This will be a great morning of fun, games, snacks, and special surprises.

Please register by 12/10/23

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10COF4DACA723A7FC1-merry>



### KIDS NIGHT OUT

DECEMBER 9TH 5-8PM

Kids age 4 to 10 are invited to join Ms. Tiffany and helpers for a fun night of food, crafts, and activities.

There is a \$5 charge per kid to help cover the cost of supplies and food.

Register at  
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10COF4DACA723A7FC1-kids2>  
or email Ms. Tiffany at [dired@unionucc.org](mailto:dired@unionucc.org).



IT'S OFFICIAL, OUR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM WILL TAKE PLACE ON  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3RD AT 9:15AM IN MEMORIAL HALL.

ALL CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO BE PART OF THIS FUN PROGRAM.

REGISTER YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN TO BE PART OF THE FUN AT

[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/10COF4DACA723A7FC1-44587444-CHILDRENS#/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10COF4DACA723A7FC1-44587444-CHILDRENS#/)



No Sunday School  
or  
Children's Church  
December  
24th & 31st

## NERF & NACHOS

**JANUARY 13, 2024 3PM TO 6PM**

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND. \*ATTENDEES UNDER 13 MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT.\*

WE ASK THAT YOU BRING YOUR OWN SAFETY GOGGLES, 1 NERF SHOOTER, AND 1 NACHO TOPPING TO ADD TO OUR NACHO BAR.

REGISTER TO ATTEND AT

[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/10COF4DAC723A7FC1-46166208-NERF](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10COF4DAC723A7FC1-46166208-NERF)



# Union UCC, Neff's Youth Group

**"Worthiness doesn't have prerequisites" - Brene Brown**



December 2023 Edition  
Pastor Kayli



Lights In The Grove

December 2, 2022

(weather date: December 3)

3pm-5pm

Free Event

Come enjoy refreshments, firepits, crafts,  
lights, Santa

Donations of hats/scarves/gloves for the  
Sixth Street Shelter



God First Wednesday

December 6, 2022

5:30pm-7:30pm

Menu: Build Your Own Sandwiches, chips, veggies and dip,  
Christmas cookies

Sign up if you can, or just show up!

There's a place just for youth!



YAT Christmas Lunch

December 10, 2022

11:30am-1:30pm

Join us for lunch, some  
planning, and some  
festive activities

Sign Up here: [https://  
www.signupgenius.com/  
go/60B0F48AEAD2BA2FE3-  
yat1](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F48AEAD2BA2FE3-yat1)

Open Sunday School

Join us for the final gather-  
ings for 2023! All youth  
grades 8th thru 12th are in-  
vited to join Pastor Kayli in  
the Youth Room during Edu-  
cation Hour (9:15am-  
10:15am) for a

low-key time just for them!

No Sign-Up needed...just  
show up!

Date: December 10



## PNEC Ambassador Corner

The annual Fall meeting of the PNEC was held November 4<sup>th</sup>. Sixty-nine [69] of the Conference's [125] churches were represented. Besides the general business of the meeting, three of the four PA Conference Ministers and an Associate Conference Minister were present to discuss the work of the Keystone Study/Work Group [KSWG] which has been meeting to discern the future of Pennsylvania's UCC Conferences as how best to serve PA's local UCC churches. The KSWG is made up of the [4] PA Conference Ministers and [4-6] members from each of the four Conferences.

They have looked at several options as a model for the future and have decided that one Pennsylvania Conference, the Keystone Conference is the best model to fulfill the Mission "to provide better spiritual, educational, programmatic and financial support to our congregations". They decided on their WHY, "Together We Are Stronger, the Keystone Conference". There is still much work to be done and sub-teams have been formed to delve into the Governance, Legal, Process/Administration, and Financial aspects of such a change. There was discussion and many questions were raised, some of which could be answered immediately and some of which the answers are not yet known.

The timeline moving forward involves:

- Question/answer sessions within each Conference,
- Spring meeting of all four PA Conferences together in June to present:
- Draft Constitution, Staffing model, Financial information, Legal parameters and a Draft Resolution,
- State-wide vote, by Conference, next November 9<sup>th</sup>,
- Provisional Resolution for Synod by October 31, 2024, to be presented to General Synod in 2025, [if the vote is No on 11/9/2024, the Resolution to Synod will be pulled and the team's work will be done], and
- Be functioning as the Keystone Conference by January 1, 2026

This is a long process and has taken and is taking much thought and prayer. Please keep the process in your prayers as the KSWG moves forward. If you would like further information, you may access the Keystone website <https://psec.org/keystone/> where you will find a summary of the group's work and meeting reports. If you have specific questions, you may email the group directly at [Keystone.Conference.project@gmail.com](mailto:Keystone.Conference.project@gmail.com) or reach out to the PNEC Conference office, 610-826-5464.

If you have any general questions, please feel free to reach out to me, Janice Metzger, at [jemrenaissinc@aol.com](mailto:jemrenaissinc@aol.com) & please put Union Ambassador in the subject line. As your PNEC Ambassador, I want to help Union members feel more connected to the Conference and the wider church.



### LOOKING FOR THE *Perfect Christmas Gift?*

Shop at church on December 3, 10, and 17 after worship and purchase a "Welcome Home" to Union UCC coffee mug for \$10 or canvas shopping bag for \$5 or 4 for \$15.

It's a great way to share your church spirit and pride!

Look for the table in the lobby.  
Profits benefit our church's mission and ministry.



## Carrie's Corner

I bet your mind is constantly working...I know mine is! Our minds are meant to think, and think, and think. Back in the day it kept us from getting eaten by monstrous wild animals!

But we don't need to be in survival mode any longer (I know, sometimes just grocery shopping feels like an act of survival)!

Our thoughts often feel uncontrollable, random, and surprising, but our minds can be redirected, and more importantly, often need to be.

I'm not talking about clearing the mind or avoiding thoughts that pop in, that's virtually impossible. But thoughts *do* trigger emotions, and those emotions have a profound effect on our mental, physical and spiritual well-being, both positively and negatively.

We can't control when a thought arrives (and sometimes they are truly inspiring, so notice them!), but we can choose where to direct our focus. Here are some ways we can help direct (and distract) our minds:

- |                                |                                   |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ~Listen to music               | ~Dance                            |
| ~Exercise or a walk            | ~Read                             |
| ~Meditate or pray              | ~Volunteer                        |
| ~Chat with an uplifting friend | ~Organize and declutter           |
| ~Work outdoors                 | ~Spend time with pets or children |
| ~Watch a fun movie             | ~Create ANYTHING                  |
| ~Cook                          |                                   |

Most of all, have *fun*!

*Carrie Beleno*

*Pastor of Visitation*

## From the Property Committee

It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas !!  
All around the church.

Garland is hanging inside and out,  
Red Bows tied at the windows and doors.

It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas !!  
All around the church.

The manger scene tells the story,  
Of the birth of Jesus Christ

It's Beginning to Look a lot like Christmas !!  
All around the church.

The grove is lit up every night,  
The lights are so sparkly and bright.

It's Beginning to Sound a lot like Christmas !!  
All around the church.

The carillon bells are playing Christmas  
tunes,  
So stand outside and sing along.

It's Beginning to Sound a lot like Christmas !!  
All around the church.

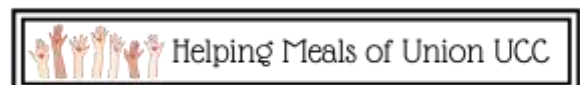
The singers are singing,  
The musicians are performing  
The pastors are preaching

Oh, What a wonderful time of the year.  
The Advent and Christmas Season is here.  
Celebrate the birth of Jesus at Union UCC.

## Helping Meals

This fall we brought back our Helping Meals ministry! Our team will be delivering a baked good with the option of a casserole or soup, if requested, for those who are in need of a bit of support due to a life change like a hospitalization, birth or death of a loved one.

To request a visit from the Helping Meals or to volunteer to bake, cook and deliver, please reach out to Pastor Carrie. If you would like to assist in coordinating the team via text and a google doc, please let her know. It's an easy way to continue to support this ministry and we'd love to have you join our team.





# Christmas

## MISSION OFFERINGS



This year the Christmas Mission Offerings will be divided to the Sixth Street Shelter in Allentown and World Central Kitchen. Please support these two mission organizations by using the Christmas Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or blank envelope marked - Christmas Mission, or electronically.



### Sixth Street Shelter

Located in Center City Allentown, Sixth Street Shelter provides safe, short-term housing for families who are experiencing homelessness of any configuration and size, this includes mothers, fathers, girls, boys, multi-generational families, or those from the LGBTQ+ community. The Sixth Street Shelter is a program of Community Action Lehigh Valley. Their goal is to assist families with secure housing through family-centered services, in-house programming, and referrals to community resources. They help guests grow as an individual and a family unit, increase academic progress, find work, find affordable housing, so they can be successful when they leave. The property has 25 private apartments, a family resource center, playground, and full-choice food pantry for residents.



### World Central Kitchen



World Central Kitchen is a not-for-profit non-governmental organization devoted to providing meals in the wake of natural disasters. Founded in 2010 by chef Jose' Andres, its operation is to be a first responder and then to collaborate and find solutions with local chefs to solve the problem of hunger, immediately following a disaster. Since its founding, they have organized meals in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Zambia, Peru, Cuba, Uganda, The Bahamas, Cambodia, Ukraine, Puerto Rico, the United States, and most recently Morocco, Turkey, Syria, and Hawaii. In August 2023, World Central Kitchen set up kitchens in Maui in relief of those in Lahaina and West Maui who lost family members, businesses and homes. They provided over 6000 meals per day with the help of volunteers.

### From the Mission Committee:

**Holy Joe's Café**— Since 2006, Holy Joe's Café has been sending free coffee to US military bases around the world. Their mission is simple: serving a little bit of home to those who serve our country.

From humble beginning in a church in Wallingford, Connecticut, they have grown to serve billions of cups of coffee to troops around the world. Where the troops go, they go.

"The coffee is a force multiplier for the Chaplain Corps," said Chaplain Captain Keith Manry, 36th Wing chaplain. "Every time they have a cup of coffee, they are reminded that somebody cares about them."

In the last decade, Holy Joe's Café has grown immensely. They currently ship coffee and supplies to hundreds of military bases, hospitals, hangar bays, aid stations and any setting where needed. Today, thousands of free cups of coffee are served to our troops in 70 countries throughout the world.

A \$500 donation is being provided to Holy Joe's Café through your Mission Offerings.



**Rolling Fork Rising** - In March 2023, the city of Rolling Fork, Mississippi was struck by a mile wide EF4 tornado, with winds up to 190 miles per hour. The tornado hit the center of town, destroying more than 250 homes and taking the lives of 14 people. Rolling Fork Rising began with a vision to help rebuild homes in Rolling Fork, to provide an opportunity for renters to return as homeowners. They currently own 17 lots and 18 acres in the city limits. Construction is underway on two houses, with three more foundations poured and ready to start. Framing components are ready in a warehouse to be sent to the construction site. Their organization is similar to Habitat for Humanity, helping families to become home owners and to improve the local community. The Mission Committee and the Consistory has approved for a \$1,000 donation be provided to Rolling Fork Rising, with funding from the Funds of Lasting Gifts endowment fund.





# Holy Grounds Coffee Hour

Enjoy some coffee, tea, juice, hot chocolate, and snacks on Sundays in Memorial Hall after both worship services.

## Upcoming hosts include:

December 3—Christmas Cookies- Worship Committee

Dec 10—Christmas Cookies—Confirmation Class

Dec 17 – Christmas Cookies

## 2024 Envelope packets

Envelope packets for 2024 will be ready for pick up starting Sunday Nov 19 .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. Memorial Hall will be open every Sunday in November and December, and the Christmas Eve dates.

Please do not use the new envelopes until 2024, everyone gets new numbers each year. Members who use the e-giving program do not receive envelope packets.

Thank you for your continued support by dropping in the collection plates on Sundays or mailing in your envelopes to the church office. Your financial support is greatly appreciated to continue the many and varied missions and ministries of Union UCC.

The Financial Leadership Team

## Because of YOU our church changes lives....

Here are some of the ways you can share your financial generosity at Union.

- **ELECTRONIC GIVING** <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/home> Choose an ongoing regular donation or a single donation with your credit or debit card. (Help us with fees if you can.)
- **Venmo @unionuccneffs** Make a donation or pay for a fundraiser or event. Complete "What's this for?"
- **Mobile Giving** Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app
- **Cash or checks (to "Union UCC")** Place in the offering plate with a member offering envelope or guest envelope (in the seat racks) or drop in the mail if you're not in person. Contact John Harting (610-799-2508) or Don Penrod (610-972-8719) or Pastor Kris if you have questions or if you'd like to learn more about other giving options or legacy gifts to Union.



Vanco



Venmo



**Country Sale**

*Community-Wide Yard Sale in our Grove*

**NEW DATE!!**

**Saturday, June 1, 2024 \* 8am -1pm**  
**Union UCC, Neffs**

**Yard Sale \* Food \* Baked Goods**

Contact someone on the team or the church office if you'd like to help us host this event. (1-4 hour shifts)

- Food prep Thursday & Friday (days and eves)
- Kitchen help, serving
- Bakers and Bake Sale
- Parking Attendants 7am to 10:30am
- Grill Guys - hot dogs and burgers
- Tear down and clean up (12-2pm)

**Watch for information on how to reserve your yard sale space in the New Year!**

Vicki Sorg, Diane Schaller, Claire Kern, Kathy Bonsell, Sheila Nagle, Sherry Penrod, Maryann Puia, Miranda Perloff, Phil Wehr, Pam Minnich, Pastor Kris



**Women's Retreat Weekend**  
**New date and location!**  
**April 26-28, 2024**  
**Tuscarora Retreat Center, Mt. Bethel**  
<https://www.tuscarora.org/>

Cost: \$175. \$88 deposit due now/before January 1.  
 \$87 balance due March 3.

Payment plans and financial assistance available.

**Checks to Union UCC, Memo Line - Women's Retreat**  
 Friends and Family members are welcome too.

**Only 30 spots available!**  
 It's always a great time away.

**Leader: Pastor Kris**  
**Planning Team: Donna Christman, Diane Schaller, Julie Johnson, Sue Steinmann, Val Borman, Julie Wehr**



**FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN**  
**LEHIGH VALLEY MOBILEPACK EVENT**  
**MARCH 8-10, 2024**



Do you want to help make a difference to children in other parts of the world who don't have enough to eat every day? This meal packing event makes a huge impact.

This is what we need to help make this event happen:

- Help with Financial donations - we need to raise \$30,000 - and most of that we need to raise by the end of December in order to commit to this event. That amount will help us pack 100,000 meals. Can you or someone you know make a donation now? Our event number is 2403-049MI. <https://give.fmsc.org/campaign/2403-049mi-neffs-pa-lehigh-valley/c508364>
- Help with set up and clean before, during and after the event.
- Help with organizing volunteer sign ups and teams.
- Help with keeping track of financial donations and follow up thank you efforts.
- Help with providing meals for the FMSC staff while they are here.
- Help with packing at the event - it's fun, inspiring, and hope-filled.

Here's the team - join us! Hannah Minnich, Ryleigh Minnich, Eric Minnich, Ron Snyder, Ann Koren, Everett and Eliot Lightner, and Pastor Kris

Contact Eliot Lightner 610-844-8327 [FMSCEvent@gmail.com](mailto:FMSCEvent@gmail.com)  
 or Pastor Kris to serve on one of the teams or to make a donation.



**UPCOMING HOSTING WEEK:  
January 14-21**



serving children and families experiencing homelessness

**Every child deserves a home.**

We need your help hosting families in our church building 4 weeks a year.

- Help with set up and tear down.
- Cook and deliver a supper one night during the week. (5:30-6pm)
- Visit with families, serve supper, and clean up. (5:30-9pm)
- Host overnight (In your own area 8:45pm-6:30am).
- Assist with food shopping during the week.
- Offer financial support through your church donations marked "Family Promise."



**Why do I volunteer?**

**Jesus tells us to love God and to love our neighbors. This is a great way to do both while helping families get back on their feet.**  
~Kerry Snyder

Please contact Kerry Snyder (610) 737-7768 or Rosalie Snyder (610) 597-9302 with questions and to sign up.  
Other Steering Team members: Ralph and Connie Gioelli, Dennis Foster, Phil and Julie Wehr, Susan Glosan

**Meditation and Prayer Gatherings with  
Kris Snyder**

**Looking for some peace and ways to decompress?**

**We meet by zoom monthly for meditation and prayer.**

**Penn Northeast Conference Community  
Thursdays at 12noon  
September 14 and 28, October 12 and 26,  
November 9 and 30**

Zoom Link: [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81188127483?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81188127483?pwd=TzdmTFpjaXVtMjRQSHY1K1hOdKV2dz09)  
pwd=TzdmTFpjaXVtMjRQSHY1K1hOdKV2dz09  
Meeting ID: 811 8812 7483 Passcode: 348630

**NOTE: You can count this as continuing education credits.**

**OR**

**Union UCC Community  
Tuesdays 7-8pm**

**September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12**

Zoom Link: [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87680378046?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87680378046?pwd=QmozYWJFemJOVENCdWJBbzRpbDVIUT09)  
pwd=QmozYWJFemJOVENCdWJBbzRpbDVIUT09  
Meeting ID: 876 8037 8046 Passcode: 954906

I'll lead us in various readings, scripture, and prayer practices like breath prayer and centering prayer, as well as meditation practices from the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, Buddhist, and Christian traditions.

Sign up at [PastorKris@unionucc.org](mailto:PastorKris@unionucc.org)

You are welcome to attend any or all of the sessions, whatever your schedule allows.

**Let's Build A Team**

**We need a team of dedicated people to help us run the projection system.**

**If you want to join this team and learn the projection system contact Pastor Kayli or Pastor Kris.  
Teamwork makes the dreamwork!**



## New Members from Pastor Kris

New members come to us with a variety of faith experiences and backgrounds as well as a variety of interests, passions, and schedules. Maybe you have been visiting us or other churches for a long time and are still wondering if this is a fit or the right time to make a commitment to join us formally. Or maybe you visited here a few times and knew right away this is your place.

In our effort to honor this diversity, we'd like to offer you a few options of continuing this conversation.

1. You can join as a member at any time. Complete the information form (attached or use the link) and return it to the office or to me. Reach out to me to schedule a time to meet. We can then welcome you as a new member on whatever Sunday you choose at your convenience.
2. The other option (or in addition to the first option) is to attend a new member gathering. This is a chance to meet with me and with other members and hear why they love their church and love to serve God here.

**Watch the Sunday worship bulletin and the monthly newsletter for future new member gathering dates. There is typically one session on a weeknight and one session on a Sunday morning from which to choose.**

We hope both options will give you a chance to meet some new friends, get some more information about us, and ask your questions.

**To let us know you are interested, please complete this information form by using this link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeXM2pHU6Pnwd020Rpm-o8BV6-eWUoxPe2fxpZnBawlmYeZ-g/viewform>**

**Or you can contact the office for a paper copy.**

We want to do whatever we can to support you in your spiritual journey here and in the community.

***Please let me know where you are in your discernment and how I can support you. Call or email me anytime.***

.....  
**On November 19<sup>th</sup>, Stewardship Sunday, our Financial Leadership Team Chair, Don Penrod shared this message:**



Our church holds a profound significance in my life, serving as a pillar of support, spiritual guidance, and community connection. Within its walls, I find solace in times of uncertainty and strength during moments of weakness. The church is not merely a physical structure but a haven where I can openly express my faith and cultivate a deeper relationship with my spiritual beliefs. It provides a space for reflection, prayer, and the opportunity to connect with a higher power, fostering a sense of purpose and meaning in my life. Moreover, Union United Church of Christ plays a vital role in fostering a sense of community. It serves as a gathering place for individuals who share similar values and beliefs, creating a supportive network that extends beyond the Sunday service. Through various activities, events, and communal worship, I've forged meaningful connections with fellow parishioners, reinforcing the idea that we are all on a shared journey of faith. The church community becomes an extended family, offering companionship, empathy, and a shared commitment to personal and collective growth. Some of the great things we offer and do: Family Promise, Feed My Starving Children, Blues Night Out, VBS, Sunday School, Children's Church, Youth Programs and now Breathe....there is something for everyone!

In essence, our church matters to me because it is not just a place of worship but a source of inspiration, comfort, and community. It provides a framework for spiritual growth and a foundation for navigating life's challenges with faith and resilience. Through the church, I have found a deeper connection to my beliefs and a supportive community that enriches my journey of personal and spiritual development.





Our blessings and prayers go to the friends and families of those who have passed.

Janice Liska passed on October 15, 2023. Services were held on October 19, 2023 at Union UCC.

## November Baptisms



Rosalyn Ann Gacesa pictured with parents  
Carol and John Gacesa III and brother  
John IV



Lainey Elizabeth Heyer pictured with parents  
Rachel and William Heyer III and sister  
Hailey

## Union UCC Staff

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prechool@unionucc.org  
Director: Annette Wilcox

Church Telephone  
Extension Directory  
610-767-6961

Pastor Kris	ext. 24
Pastor Kayli	ext. 25
Marissa Haney	ext. 21
Tiffany Lakatos	ext. 27
Barbara Carinci	ext. 32
Music Office	ext. 26



Find us on  
Facebook

www.facebook.com/unionneffs

# Financial Report

Fiscal Year	Operating Fund	Designated Funds	Grand Total All Funds
7-1-2023	(\$4,682.00)	\$39,850.00	\$35,168.00
Income	\$176,046.00	\$16,380.00	\$192,426.00
Expenses	\$159,657.00	\$30,258.00	\$189,915.00
10-31-23	\$11,707.00	\$25,972.00	\$37,679.00

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

## Donate, Recycle and Help Your Church

As you are cleaning out closets and cabinets be sure to keep Union UCC in mind. Bring your donations at any time to the bin in our grove. The church receives a certain amount of money for each pound that is donated. Items that are usable are resold or recycled. You are also helping to save the amount of things that end up in a landfill by donating your items this way. Recycle Local's goal is to help agencies have 0% waste.

**Items accepted include: clean and dry clothing, shoes, sneakers, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, towels, drapes, pillow cases and stuffed animals. Place all items in plastic bags. NO furniture, rags, pillows, toys, or household goods.**

This is one more way to give and support the mission and ministry of God's church at Union UCC. Thank you.

**New Member Sessions** We encourage you to make a deeper commitment to your faith by joining us as a member. Contact Pastor Kris [PastorKris@unionucc.org](mailto:PastorKris@unionucc.org) to sign up. See page 14 for more information.

**Dual Member Status** Dual membership is available to people who wish to join our church but who want to also maintain membership at another church. Dual members will have the same rights and duties as a member. According to our Constitution members are required to commune and donate yearly. We look forward to continuing to welcome new members into the Christian journey with our faith family here at Union UCC.

**Baptism** We offer baptisms during worship at the 10:30 service every other month. Our next dates are Sunday, January 14, 2024 and March 3, 2024. There is a pre-baptism zoom session with a pastor the week before. Sign up by calling the church office at 610-767-6961 or emailing Marissa Haney at [administrator@unionucc.org](mailto:administrator@unionucc.org). The pastors will work with you if the scheduled dates are a conflict.

**Weddings** To begin the process of scheduling your pre-marriage sessions and wedding at church/a venue and/or with one of the pastors call the church office at 610-767-6961 or email Marissa Haney at [administrator@unionucc.org](mailto:administrator@unionucc.org).

There is information on our website, forms to complete are downloadable. More information on the site: <http://www.unionucc.org/resources> for New Member, Baptism, and Wedding forms.

**Room or Hall Use for Members** Members are now able to reserve the use of rooms in the church again. Contact Marissa in the office to see if your date is available, to complete the necessary forms, to learn the guidelines and process, and to pay the fees. One time use fees are \$60 plus a \$25 cleaning fee. We do not offer room use to non-members.