

what r u up 2?

Get up to something instead of
giving something up this Lent.



Store Up Ash Wednesday February 14, 2024 7pm

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

Let us know you're here by completing the Welcome Card in the racks in front of you and hand it to a pastor or drop it in the offering plate. Feel free to call or email a pastor.

Vision Statement

UNION UCC: RELEVANT, ENGAGED, and GROWING

Mission Statement

Our church is a diverse family of believers, spiritually united in Christ, rooted in a rich heritage and growing with vitality into the future. We proclaim God's word, nurturing and inspiring dedicated Christian discipleship through worship, education, pastoral care, fellowship, and outreach within our community and the world.

***No matter who you are or where you on life's journey,
you are welcome here.***

Lay Reader: Carol Pope
Sound: Doug Albert

We will be sharing Holy Communion today.

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace. If you are at home, we invite you to find something to eat and drink that represents the elements for you.

Here, 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.

GATHERING UP

Music for Centering

Jesus Paid It All Elvina M. Hall, John T. Grape
Blake Hoppes

Welcome

We Acknowledge What's Up

You Raise Me Up

Leader: Lent is often known as a time of giving something up in order to make room in our lives for spiritual pursuits. Rather than just “giving up” in Lent, the scriptures ask us to consider all that Jesus is “up to” and all that he asks us to be up to in his name. Instead of bemoaning what we can’t do, or used to do, in a culture where “measuring up” to external standards seems impossible, this Lent we will celebrate the small things that we can do right now to respond to God’s call in our place, for our time.

As we begin this Lent season, we contemplate the essence and the substance of our lives. Do we spend time reaching for “must haves” that our culture says we need? Or are we

storing up the things that bring us closer to the reign of God, the good things — the treasures — that fill us and others with well-being of body, mind, and spirit?

**ALL: When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary
When troubles come and my heart burdened be
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence
Until You come and sit awhile with me**

**You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas
I am strong, when I am on Your shoulders
You raise me up to more than I can be**

Leader:

Let us pray together:

**Merciful God, we come before you knowing that change
must happen in our lives.**

**But at times facing those changes feels overwhelming.
We feel the external expectations that distract and
draw us into less important pursuits.**

**In this moment of quiet, we lift up to you
those things we'd like to give up for good...
for the sake of The Good.**

Meditative Moment

Leader: There is assurance that God will grant mercy and restore joy. Hear what the Psalmist requests:

Have mercy on me, God, according to your faithful love!
Wipe away my wrongdoings according to your great compassion!
Wash me completely clean of my guilt; purify me from my sin...
Create a clean heart for me, God; put a new, faithful spirit deep inside me!
Please don't throw me out of

your presence; please don't take your holy spirit away from me. Return the joy of your salvation to me and sustain me with a willing spirit... Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will proclaim your praise. You don't want sacrifices. If I gave an entirely burned offering, you wouldn't be pleased. A broken spirit is my sacrifice, God. You won't despise a heart, God, that is broken and crushed.

(Psalm 51, excerpts)

In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.

ALL: In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.

Glory to God, Amen!

Please stand in body or spirit.

ALL: You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains

You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas

I am strong, when I am on Your shoulders

You raise me up to more than I can be

The Peace

As a people forgiven and freed,
we reach out to lift others up, offering the peace of Christ.

Peace be with you!

And also with you!

You are invited to share the Peace with those around you
[remembering to send your peace through the camera to
those worshiping remotely].

***Opening Hymn**

#107 Amazing Grace

Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.**

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!**

**The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.**

Please be seated.

FILLING UP

The Word Uplifts

Scripture

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Abba in heaven.

So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Abba who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Abba who is in secret; and your Abba who sees in secret will reward you.

And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Abba who is in secret; and your Abba who sees in secret will reward you.

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Message Pastor Kris

BUILDING UP

Up to Something Good

An Ash Wednesday Ritual

Let My Prayers Rise Up Marty Haugen

Leader: Let us sing Psalm 141 as our song of preparation for the imposition of ashes. First we will listen to our choir sing it once and then we'll repeat the refrain:

Let my prayer rise up
like incense before you,
the lifting up of my hands
as an offering to you.

**Let my prayer rise up
like incense before you,
the lifting up of my hands
as an offering to you.**

Leader: The imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday is a Christian tradition implemented in the 11th century when Ash Wednesday was added to the liturgical calendar. The reference to ashes as part of a tradition of penitence was connected with wearing sackcloth in the book of Daniel. In those early days of marking Ash Wednesday, those who had been ousted from the church would wear sackcloth and ashes all through Lent until they rejoined the church on Maundy Thursday by receiving the holy meal once again with the faithful.

We don't believe in ousting people from the church. We are all in need of reconnection with Divine Love and our church is a place where mercy is the order of every day. But on Ash Wednesday we remember that we are not mythical gods. We are not perfect and we will not live forever. This year we commit to making the most out of our one, precious life by being up to something good. Rather than give something up as penitence this year, we are focusing on the little things that lift up our lives and the lives of others. Like the incense the psalmist writes about in Psalm 141, even the smallest actions of our lives can elevate us all to a higher plane of love, mercy, and justice. These, then are the treasures we must store up. Let our ashes this day remind us of how precious is our time together on this earth.

**Let my prayer rise up
like incense before you,
the lifting up of my hands
as an offering to you.**

**We invite you to come forward to the railing to receive
ashes and communion.**

**The ushers will direct you when to come forward.
The pastors will let you know when to leave the railing.
Please place your empty cup in the trays as you return to
your seat.**

**If you want to be served in your seats, let the ushers know
and the pastors will come to you.**

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.

**If you are at home, we invite you to find something to eat
and drink that represents the elements for you.**

Communion

**Music Offering Adult Choir
Change My heart O God
Eddie Espinosa Setting by Joel Raney**

Prayer after Imposition

Author of the Cosmos, our view of this world is so limited
but you create and see and know all things.
May our life practices be used in ways that reverberate to
the edges of possibility,
treasures in heaven, multiplied on earth through your love.

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

Uplifting Messages of Support

Offering/Offeratory

During this series, we will offer our support for our church activities, mission, and budget in the usual ways, but we will also be collecting "uplifting messages" to each other, our church and community and the world.

As we listen to our announcements, you are invited to write a message that you want to put out into the world on the card insert. Share an encouraging word of hope or message for others as a prayerful response to worship. We will gather these in the offering plates. Or you can place them in the hot air balloon baskets at the doors. For those of you at home, you can post your messages in your comments or email them to the office or a pastor. We will be adding these to our hot air balloon throughout the season and on Easter Sunday.



OFFERING

Thank you for the many ways you give of yourself to God's ministry and mission here at Union.

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> or use the QR code with your cell phone. Choose an ongoing regular donation or a single donation with your credit or debit card. (Help us with fees if you can.)



Electronic Giving

• **FREE Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app** Look for our church Union United Church of Christ, Neffs, PA and register your information to contribute.



Vanco Mobile

• **Venmo @unionuccneffs** Make a donation or pay for a fundraiser or event. Complete "What's this for?" See QR code.



Venmo

• **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.

Music Offering

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross Isaac Watts
Blake Hoppes

Please stand in body or spirit.

What R U Up 2 for My Sake?
[sung to the tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN]

**What are you up to for my sake?
What are you up to “for the Good?”
Would you come now, follow, join up?**

**Let us take up, wake up anew,
Let us build up, fill up with you!**

**Let us lift up
the gifts we raise up.
For the sake of,
for the shape of,
heaven on earth.**

Offertory Prayer

Spirit of Belovedness, we ask you to multiply these gifts
in ways that extend what we can do exponentially.

Through them may many be uplifted —
our gifts transformed into your voice of love in the world.

Blessing for the Journey

Leader: We are providing you with a journal that you can use each day in a quiet time of reflection. The entries are brief and you don't need to spend a long time each day, but carving out a regular moment to stop and offer your intentions to God can build us up in ways we never imagined. You can pick up your journal in the lobby tonight and on Sundays.

At home – contact office or a pastor if you'd like a copy emailed to you.

You can also watch for the journal in our weekly emails and on our Facebook page too.

And so now go into the world,
knowing that there are treasures all around,
waiting to be amplified and lifted up.
May this season be one of soaring with the Spirit,
in the name of Jesus Christ,
and in the love and mercy of the Creator.

When someone asks you, “What are you up to?”
you can respond,

ALL: “With God’s help, I’m up to Something Good!”

Let the people say, Amen!

Amen!

LIVING IT UP

***Closing Hymn**

#677 They'll Know We are Christians By Our Love
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**1. We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

**2. We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,**

Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

**3. We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
We will work with each other, we will work side by side, And
we'll guard each one's dignity and save each man's pride:
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

Music for Movin' on Up

I Surrender All Judson Van DeVenter & Winfield Weeden
Blake Hoppes

Holy Grounds Coffee Hour on Sundays

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

Upcoming hosts include:

Feb 18– Confirmation Class

Feb 25– Church & Ministry

March 3– Mission Committee

March 10– Consistory

March 17– Youth Group

March 24– Fellowship Committee

March 31– Easter Crew!

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$8,456.00
Calendar Year 2023 (Jan.-Dec.)	\$ 403,460.00
Calendar Year 2022 (Jan.-Dec.)	\$ 408,693.00
Change from Last Year	-1.3%
Budget FY 2023-24 (July-Dec.)	\$ 228,270.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-Dec.)	\$ 207,436.61
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-9.1%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	61
10:30 AM	155
Education Hour	5
Online Views	292
Breathe	20

2023 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	\$, 300lbs
Total YTD:	\$100, 1,400lbs

Blanket Sunday	\$704.00
Souper Bowl	\$378.00

Presentations to the Glory of God

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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