

March 31, 2024

Easter Sunday: look UP



When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. — Mark 16:4



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

GATHERING UP

To prepare for Easter the scriptures have been asking us to consider all that Jesus is “up to” and that he asks us to be up to in his name. Today we celebrate all the small things that we can do right now to respond to God’s call in this place and time. What are you up to?

Music for Centering

Prelude
Mitchell Roth

Welcome

We will be sharing Holy Communion today.

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace. You will be served by the worship leaders standing in their place. Please go to them.

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

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.

We Acknowledge What’s Up

You Raise Me Up

Leader: When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the

tomb. They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?"

When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." (*Mark 16: 1-7*)

Leader: Let us pray together:

**Ever-Living God, we come with our heads bent down
sometimes,
overwhelmed with Good Friday news.
Raise us up, lift up our eyes,
so that we might look up and see
the tenacity of life in the midst of death.**

Leader: Hear assurance in what the Psalmist proclaims:

O give thanks to the LORD, for God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever! Let Israel say, "God's steadfast love endures forever." The LORD is my strength and my might; God has become my salvation. There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: "The right hand of the LORD does valiantly; the right hand of the LORD is exalted; the right hand of the LORD does valiantly. I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the LORD." (*Psalm 118, excerpts*)

In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.
**ALL: In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.
Glory to God, Amen!**

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].

Leader: Welcome to you all! Whether you are visiting, come here often or rarely, we have all gathered to receive good news. That is what we boldly proclaim today: in the midst of all that brings us down, we can look up in this moment and know that we are not alone and that life and love wins.

Three days had passed. The women went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body, according to custom. No doubt the journey to the tomb was heavy. Perhaps they approached with heads lowered in defeat and grief. But then they looked up and it changed their lives. The barrier that they thought would be there was gone and what they discovered instead was life. Will we look up? Will we look up from our complacency, apathy, fear and depression about "the way things are" and be filled with the promise of new life and hope yet again? Will we be part of the raising up of humanity? We can say yes to this, for Christ the Lord is Risen Today!

***Opening Hymn**

Instrument Ensemble

***Hymn** Christ the Lord Is Risen Today
#233 New Century Hymnal (Black Hymnal)

**Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Alleluia!
Mortal tongues and angels say, Alleluia!
Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia!
Sing, glad heav'ns, and earth, reply, Alleluia!**

**Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!
Fought the fight, the battle won, Alleluia!
Death in vain forbids Christ rise, Alleluia!
God has opened paradise, Alleluia!**

FILLING UP

The Word Uplifts

Scripture

Acts 10: 34-43

Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ — he is Lord of all.

That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in

Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Message

Pastor Kayli

BUILDING UP

Up to Something Good

Prayers of the People

Leader: We call upon you, O God, in the midst of the fullness of life — the joy and the sorrow. We pray that we can be “up to something good” for our selves, our neighborhoods, and our world. We lift our thankful hearts for these acts of uplifting goodness:

We call upon you, O God, to incline your ear and extend your love and healing power for these laments:

We call upon you, O God, to give us the strength and courage to be up to something good for the sake of The Good. In this moment — in our mind’s eye — we imagine and offer our commitment to one small thing this week that will lift someone up, elevate and affirm the good when we see it, and bring a bit more calm or joy where we are. And if we find we are not up to it, we pray we can accept the goodness of others and feel your encouraging love.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray...

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 – we will not be collecting your offerings during the service. Please place your offerings and/or Mission offerings supporting The Allentown Warming Station at the YMCA or Parkland C.A.R.E.S. Food Pantry as you arrive or as you leave worship in the offering plates on white stands. Thank you for all the ways you continue to support the mission and ministry of Union UCC.

Uplifting Messages of Support

Offering/Offertory

During the last few weeks we have been collecting "uplifting messages" for those in worship.

See the booklet in your bulletin with the messages shared for you, our church and community, to encourage you to look up and know that God is with you and so are we.



OFFERING

Easter Mission Offering

Please share your financial support by using the Easter Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or blank envelope marked - Easter Mission, or donate online at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/campaign/C-12H63>

The Allentown Warming Station at the YMCA

The Warming Station provides shelter, food, and a safe place for those experiencing homelessness in the community. They are open to welcome guests Nov 1 - April 15 each night from 7 pm - 7 am. The YMCA also provides healthy dinner time meals seven days a week.

Parkland C.A.R.E.S. Food Pantry

Parkland C.A.R.E.S. strives to feed and serve every member of the community affected by and suffering from hunger in the Parkland community. The food pantry serves over 130 families who are provided with a variety of food items each month.

**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.)



• **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.



Offeratory Prayer

Spirit of Resurrection, we ask you to raise up these gifts
in ways that we could not imagine.

Lift up our heads and our hearts as Easter people
who refuse to believe that
there is something we can be up to for the Good of this
world.

So be it! Amen.

Holy Communion

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 communion for you.

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 Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and holy thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Creator of all things.

You formed us in your image
and filled us up with your breath of life.
When we turned away, deflated and down,
your love remained steadfast.
You delivered us from captivity,
ignited us again with the warmth of your love,
made covenant to be our sovereign God,
and spoke to us through your prophets.

Leader: 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 blood 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: God of love,
pour out your love and spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the love of Christ,
so that we may be for the world the love of Christ!

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry with all the world,

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

Leader: Friends, we welcome everyone to this meal. You are invited to take and eat, to take and drink, and to be filled by the precious body and blood of the risen Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Music Offering

Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day

John Mason Neale

Mitchell Roth

Blessing for the Journey

And so now go into the world,
remembering that whenever you feel down, you can look
up.

Look up and notice the life can't help itself... it continues

renewal all around you.

In spite of what you are feeling at any one time in your life,
know that you are loved, that your life matters,
that your life can be uplifted and you can uplift those around
you.

You have all you need to be up to something.

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

"With God's help, I'm up to something good!"

Let the people say, Amen!

Amen!

LIVING IT UP

***Closing Hymn** Jesus Christ Is Risen Today
New Century Hymnal (Black Hymnal)

**Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
Our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
Who did once, upon the cross, Alleluia!
Suffer to redeem our loss, Alleluia!**

**To the tomb the women bring, Alleluia!
Spices rich, and offering, Alleluia!
Asking where might Jesus be, Alleluia!
Savior come to set us free, Alleluia!**

**Christ appears in full array, Alleluia!
Sing with joy this Paschal day, Alleluia!
Christ now from the dead is raised, Alleluia!
Holy Trinity be praised, Alleluia!**

Music for Movin' on Up

Postlude Mitchell Roth

Thank you to:

Our worship design team for their work in decorating the church for Easter: Claire and Doug Kern, Deb and Dan Topp, Kathy and Rick Bonsell, Tiffany Lakatosh, Miranda Brown, Pastors Kayli and Kris.

Sound Team Doug Albert, Mike Baer, Pat Sorg, Karl Klinger, Dawn Dengler.

Sunday Set Up Staff and Tech Team Payge Haydt, Hannah Minnich, Ryleigh Minnich

Flowers Sponsors for the Sanctuary and for our Visitation List and our **Helping Hearts and Communion Ministers** for delivery to those on our Visitation List.

ALL who helped to make our Lent, Holy Week, and Easter so meaningful. Thank you to everyone who helped clean and decorate our sanctuary, church, and grove. Thank you to those who served as choir members, musicians, ushers, greeters, and worship participants. Thank you to our staff, Consistory, and leaders for giving your time and talents so generously.

And thank you to The Easter Bunny, his helper, and the Mimosa and Snack Team.

Giving God thanks for you and God's church community here at Union!

**Thank you for all that YOU do to be God's church here
and out there.**



EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week:	\$5,833.00
Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-Feb.)	\$ 70,110.00
Calendar Year 2023 (Jan.-Feb.)	\$ 67,335.00
Change from Last Year	4.1%
Budget FY 2023-24 (July-Feb.)	\$ 298,400.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-Feb.)	\$ 277,547.31
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-7.0%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	60
10:30 AM	163
Online Views	443
Breathe	12

2023 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	lbs
Total YTD:	\$700, 2,575lbs

Easter Mission	\$2,362.00
----------------	------------

Presentations to the Glory of God

**Happy Easter!
Pastor Kris**

Good News Sponsor– for \$20 help us cover the costs of advertising on social media, mailings, and local papers.
Children’s Bulletin sponsor– for \$8 cover the cost of bulletins for children.

Send to Union UCC through your offering envelope or online marked Spread the Good News or Children’s Bulletin. Contact Marissa to sign up for a certain date or to sponsor in honor or memory of someone.

<p>CCLI LICENSE # 1523377 / Streaming # 20407732 One License #A714125 / Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from <i>ONE LICENSE</i>, License #A714125</p>
--