



September 8, 2024

“Blue and Red Make Purple: Kindness”

Guest Music: Ben Anderson (Ben Tyler)

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.

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.***

Union UCC is an Open and Affirming (ONA) Community.

Lay Reader: 8am Carol Pope, 10:30am Brynn Buskirk
8am Ushers: Kerry Snyder, Tom Anderson, Larry Todd, Lorie Hackett
10:30 am Ushers: Janice Metzger, Julie Johnson, Laura Kohler, Ralph Gioielli, Connie Gioielli, Carol James
Greeters: Jim & Leanna Lane, Gene & Christina Thrash
Sound: Dawn Dengler

Prelude Music

Jesus is all the World to Me (Tune: Elizabeth) Will L. Thompson
Blake Hoppes

Welcome to Union UCC and Worship Today!

Our worship theme: Do Unto Others

Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another. – Proverbs 27:19

Our world seems to be consumed with division—often typified in the colors red and blue. Rather than stay in our monochromatic silos, the Golden Rule in scripture challenges us to engage in conversation and seek to create whatever common good we can with our relatives, friends, and neighbors who we might consider to be on the “other side” politically and ideologically. As we attempt to come together, the idea is not that we are obliterating either one or trying to change each other, but rather we discover the beauty that can be created when we work together to make the world a better place. The “purple space” is where we cultivate kindness, compassion, humility, respect, and love for one another and for the good of all the world, no matter what.

Re-Orientation

Leader: Today we begin a bold and brave worship series in which we face the spiritual consequences of the divisions in our society. I want to ask you a mind-blowing question: Did you know that more than 99% of our DNA is the same from one human to another? This surely makes us kin. The word “kindness” originally developed from a root word that meant “family” or “with the feeling of relatives for each other.” We begin this series considering the implications of spending so much of our time feeling estranged from, and resentful toward, those whose less than 1% DNA moves them in a

different direction from us. And we begin to dream of finding a “purple space” in which to exchange goodness.

Sung Response: Christ Has Broken Down the Wall

All Sung:

Christ has broken down the wall.

Christ has broken down the wall.

Let us join our hearts as one,

Christ has broken down the wall.

Leader The act of simply coming together is “revolutionary,” which in its earliest form meant “finding a course around a central point.” We gather around the Light of Christ as the center and guiding light of our lives. This becomes our point of reference for our relationships and our love in the world. This is our “kindness revolution.” Let us pray:

God of Mercy,

we ask you to come mighty close,

for we are a divided world,

and we are not sure of our footing in this moment.

Steady us, and invite us

to “do unto others” in ways that build up

your kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven.

We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Center That Holds,
and in the power of the Spirit That Transforms. **Amen.**

All Sung:

We’re accepted as we are.

We’re accepted as we are.

**Through God’s power, all is reconciled;
we’re accepted as we are.**

**Cast aside your doubts and fears.
Cast aside your doubts and fears.
Peace and love freely offered here;
cast aside your doubts and fears.**

Peace Across the Divide

Reader 1: I glimpse you from afar, and I'm suspicious.

Reader 2: I cannot understand you, and it makes me afraid.

Reader 1: What if we are too different?

Reader 2: What if you don't care about me?

Reader 1: I cannot imagine we have anything to share.

Reader 2: I'm not sure I am willing to open myself
to a conversation.

Leader: Wait.

People: Breathe.

Leader: Let the anxiety take a break for just a moment.

People: Breathe again.

Leader: We are not alone.

People: Christ is with us.

Leader: Let us take a deep breath together ...

The rhythm of our breath and heartbeat is the same.

Our desire for life and love is the same.

Our desire for a peace in which we flourish is the same.

Let this moment permeate our souls,
and let us pass the peace of Christ between us.

This peace is meant for all people.

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

***Please stand in body or spirit to greet each other and for the first song.**

*Opening Hymn

ALL:

**There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy,
Like the wide-ness of the sea;
There's a kind-ness in God's jus-tice,
Which is more than li-ber-ty.**

**There is no place where earthly sor-rows
Are more felt than in God's Hea-ven;
There is no place where earthly fail-ings
Have such kind-ly judg-ment giv-en.**

**For the love of God is broad-er
Than the mea-sures of our minds;
And the heart of the Eter-nal
Is most won-der-ful-ly kind.**

**If our love were but more faithful,
We could gladly trust God's word;
And our lives would show thanksgiving
For the goodness of our God.**

Please be seated.

10:30 Worship "The Jesus Tour" Children's Time

Song: The Wheels on the Bus (adapted)

Children are invited forward for a Children's Time during the song and then leave with Ms. Tiffany for Children's Church (Or return to sit with their family if they prefer).

***The wheels on the bus go round and round
Round and round, round and round
The wheels on the bus go round and round
All in God's love***

Children's Church – during 10:30am Worship for ages 3- grade 5. Kids start in worship with their family and are invited forward for a children's time, They then leave with Ms. Tiffany and return before worship is over.

Kids are invited to the Education Hour and Faith Formation for All Ages – 9:15-10:15am on Sundays, ages 3 to grade 7.

Blessing of the Backpacks, Devices, Students, Educators, School Staffs, and all Learners and Growers!

PRAYER

God, thank you for new opportunities to learn and grow in this upcoming school year.

Be with our teachers, leaders, caregivers, and administrators as they guide us into the new school year. Give them the tools and energy to create engaging ways to learn and grow.

Help us to open our hearts and minds to new ideas, new friends, new leaders, and new ways of learning.

Show us how to seek joy in all things.

When things don't go as planned, help us rejoice in the new experience.

God, pour out your blessing upon these students, families, teachers, and leaders. Bless their backpacks, Chromebooks, classrooms, school buildings, and all preparations that help build a wonderful school experience. May each of you be a blessing and light in your new year! Go and light up the world!

Amen.

Scripture

Luke 6: 31-36, NRSVUE

Reader: The news we consume sometimes consumes us. What is the "really good news?" Together, we find ways to tell deeply good news for all people by filtering our

interactions through the lens of kindness. Today's scripture describes God's nature as "kind"—even and especially to those who turn their backs on God's invitation to be kind. What we put into the world is part of the ongoing creation of the world. This, really, is the only thing we can control—the energy with which we react to circumstances and people. What will it be?

Scripture Reader: "Do to others as you would have them do to you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for [God] is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your [Abba, God,] is merciful.

Reader: A word of God for our times.

*People: **Thanks be to God.***

Video: Do Unto Others - The Golden Rule

**Message Through Music
Ben Anderson (Ben Tyler)**

Originally from New Jersey, Ben has played in various bands while in Albany, NY and Boston, MA before finding himself in a small corner of the Lehigh Valley. His pop-based melodies and emotionally-driven lyrics have landed him many opportunities, opening for national acts including Guster, Simple Plan, Tyler Hilton, Ludacris and Collective Soul among others.

Ben began his career at 15 playing one of his first shows at

the now-shuttered Lion's Den in the Village in NYC. From there he went on to college and continued to perfect his songwriting style. He has played various clubs in and around Boston and NYC including Great Scott, the Middle East, T.T. The Bear's, The Trash Bar, and Ralph's Diner.

In 2022, Ben released his first LP titled "Phoenix", a very personal story that was written over the course of several years. He plans on releasing other singles later this year. Ben and his family are members here at Union. Ashley grew up here and returned here after college with Ben and their kids, Lillian and Beckham. Thanks Ben for graciously sharing and donating your time, talents, and inspiration with us through your music.

You can catch him locally playing at places like Musik Fest and the Easton Public Market and you can follow him at Bentylermusic.com.

**Looking for more encouragement to Do Unto Others and practice the Golden Rule?
Join the Campaign for Kindness!**

<https://campaignforkindness.com/>

How do you want to be treated?

There's a phrase, commonly known as The Golden Rule, that simply states: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." A version of this teaching can be found in almost every major religion. This universal rule holds the power to bring people together.

Do Unto Others is a grassroots movement launched by [Resurrection, a United Methodist Church](#) in the Kansas City area, to encourage people to be intentional about treating one another with kindness, even those with whom we disagree. A vote for kindness is a step toward overcoming the polarization in our country through civility and respect.

**Get a sticker, pin, or magnet today – and Go Purple
with Kindness!**

Prayer Song

Ubi Caritas

*Original Latin Translation: “Where charity and love are found,
God is there.”*

All Sung:

**Live in charity and steadfast love,
Live in charity, God will dwell with you.**

Prayers

Leader: Jesus' ministry demonstrated an alternative story to the ones that were espoused in his day. He taught that “the last shall be first,” “love your enemies”... and even invited unlikely guests to dinner. Our response to the invitation of Christ to be his Body in the world is to make these alternative sacred narratives more real in our own lives for the sake of the world. We come to prayer today as “others.” In Jesus' edict to “do unto others,” we are all someone's “other.” We are all unknown or different to someone else. And yet, as we have learned today, we are only less than 1% “other.” And so, we pray together the prayers of the people, for we are both “other” and “the same.” Your response is “for ourselves and others.”

We pray for safety,
for ourselves and others.

We pray for healing,
for ourselves and others.

We pray for the spiritual capacity for kindness,
for ourselves and others.

We pray for freedom to live,

for ourselves and others.

Holy, Loving, Kind and Merciful God...

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.**

All Sung:

Live in charity and steadfast love,

Live in charity, God will dwell with you.

**NEWS ABOUT THE MINISTRY AND MISSION OF GOD'S CHURCH
AT UNION**



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](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.



Electronic Giving

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



Vanco Mobile

• **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.



Venmo

Music Offering Ben Anderson

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

***Offering Response**

Tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN

All Sung:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Praise God all creatures here below!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

**Help us to work together well,
off'ring our kindness to the world.**

Follow Jesus, praise the Spirit,

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

RIPPLING FORTH

Leader: Actions create ripples of reactions. We move into the world praying that the result of our worshipful work will create actions of kindness that extend far beyond our knowing. Let's just see what can happen when we turn up the volume of kindness and treat others as we would hope to be treated. Let us Do Unto Others with ever-deepening understanding that lasts far beyond this moment in history. Let us continue into the unknown future with hope that we can survive, we can thrive, together—no matter the outcomes of a divided world. Let us sing our closing hymn as a way of beginning to ripple forth from here, spreading healing to all in this land.

***Closing Hymn**

God Will See Us Through Ceurvels, Sirchio

**In times of brokenness, In every wilderness,
God has seen us through.
Times when our strength was gone,
Somehow we carried on,
God has seen us through.
Look behind and see throughout history,
God has never let us down.
Lean ahead and trust
God is guiding us,
God is with us here right now.**

**God will see me through
God will see you through
God will see us through somehow.
Step by step we'll be,
Given all we need,
God will see us through this now.**

(Repeat)

Benediction

May the Holy One show you the way
to Do Unto Others with Kindness.

May the Christ whose Light is the Center of All-That-Is
ground you in the assurance that no one is outside of
love.

May the Spirit show forth through you
in extraordinary acts you never imagined you had the
power to achieve.

And may you know the peace that surpasses all un-
derstanding,
especially when it is difficult to understand.

And the people said, "**Amen!**"

All Sung:

**We will tear down the walls.
We will tear down every wall.
God has called us one and all;
Christ has broken down the wall,
Christ has broken down the wall.**

Postlude Music
Be Thou My Vision Irish Folk Melody
Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$3,344.00
Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-July)	\$ 234,804.00
Calendar Year 2023 (Jan.July)	\$ 223,865.00
Change from Last Year	4.9%
Budget FY 2024-25 (July)	\$ 22,350.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July)	\$ 28,680.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	28.3%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	N/A
10:30 AM	69
Online Views	98

2024 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	\$, lbs
Total YTD:	\$975, 3,390lbs

Neighbors in Need	
\$722.00	

Presentations to the Glory of God

In honor of our Pastors- Maria Beltz

In loving memory of grandparents, Eleanor and Norman Peters and Iva Geiger-Kern. Love, Ann.

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.

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