UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Volume 16, Issue 1 January 2025

ON Relevant • Engaged • Growing

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participate in our Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting which will be held on Sunday, January 26, 2025 following the 10:30 service.			New Members/ Family Promise	Pg. 14	
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l thank you all for y		oin us in person.	out the past year and look	*****	\mathbf{i}
		ce to God and our co		Happy	**
May Goc	l continue to bless o	our church family and	those we serve.	New	
	Re	espectfully,		* Year	
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Wednesday, January 29 Faith on Tap 6:30-8:30pm

Korny's Tavern at Kornfeind's Market 2228 Old Post Rd, Coplay

God. Conversation. Food & Drink.

Park in the back of the store and enter from there. Cost: Your drink (alchol and non-alcohol options) Complimentary Kornfeind's Food. Sign up if you can, or just join us.

SIGN UP HERE: https://bit.ly/41KAjKa

Hosted by Kris Snyder, Senior Pastor, Union UCC, Neffs and Joe Kornfeind, Kornfeind's Market and Business Professor, with other guests.





Thanks

Kornbeind's Market

BREATHE

TUESDAYS ONCE Δ MONTH IN THE SANCTUARY



NO JANUARY FEBRUARY 11 AT 7PM MARCH 11 AT 7PM **APRIL 8 AT 7PM** MAY 1 AT 7PM

Catch your Breath... with God Prayer * Meditation * Music * Communion Led by Roni Gerry, Pastor Carrie, and Pastor Kris

We still have room for you! Get your deposit in to save your spot!

Women's Retreat Weekend April 4-6, 2025 **Tuscarora Retreat Center.** Mt. Bethel https://www.tuscarora.org

\$87 balance due March 1. Payment plans & assistance available. Checks to Union UCC, Memo Line - Women's Retreat Friends and Family members are welcome too. Only 30 spots available. Leader: Pastor Kris Planning Team: Donna Christman, Diane Schaller, Julie Johnson, Sue Steinmann, Val Borman, Julie Wehr

\$175. \$88 deposit due now.



Here is Union UCC's logo!

Adult Faith Formation Classes with Pastor Kris and Pastor Carrie

Fridays from 9:30 to 11am Jan 10, 17, 24, Jan 31 Sundays from 9:15 to 10:15am Jan 12, 19, 26 Feb 2

Hear Us Out by Sue Pizor Yoder and Co. Lab. Ing. 6 Ouestions on Belonging and Belief – this team interviewed over 200 people under forty in search of the lessons they might teach about belonging, adversity, legacy, and faith. This book illustrates the ways millennials and Gen Z are navigating life, crafting their stories, and making meaning. McLaren says, "this is the must read for churches that are shrinking in size and wrinkling with age to help take seriously when they consider ways to welcome emerging generations into their midst. Your congregation needs this book!"

Note: In addition to these gatherings there is an adult group that meets on God First Wednesdays on the first Wednesday of the month and also every Wednesday of the month. God First starts with supper (you can join or skip) at 5:30 with small groups starting at 6:00-7:30pm. See more detailed info.



Thank you to Nicole Pickens of Resonant Word for your creative work and design.
Thank you to our Marketing Team for leading us through the process: Brynn Buskirk, Marianne Kitzmiller, Don Penrod, and Pastor Kris (and the LPT/Consistory).
Thank you Funds of Lasting Gifts for funding this effort.

The Union UCC logo development was informed by how members and leadership understand the church's identity, history, context, values, and goals, via interviews, a survey, and a site visit. Of particular significance were the terms "Relevant, Engaged, and Growing." Almost all survey respondents said being part of the United Church of Christ denomination is important to them. To subtly invoke UCC identity, the font and most of the color palette utilizes elements from the UCC brand standards. Additionally, the rainbow of colors suggests diversity/inclusion, as well as vibrant life. The primary symbol in the logo design is a tree with rainbow leaves. The tree suggests the church's growing nature, as well as providing a connection to the church's physical setting, especially the Grove. The "i" in Union forms the trunk of the tree, and its shape suggests a person with arms outstretched in praise and joy as well as welcome.

Knitters and crocheters:

We are looking for folks to make baby blankets to share with our families when they have a child baptized. Size around 32" by 32" and gender neutral colors like sage, white, yellow, and multi colors and must be soft. We also need a few larger ones every year for older children.

Contact Pastor Kris if you are able to help with this ministry of wrapping our kids in

Union UCC love!

Feed My Starving Children Fundraiser

Back by popular demand, Wawa Shorti Hoagie vouchers. Each one sells for \$6.00 and raises enough funds to feed six children for a day! They will be available after 10:30 services.







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

Upcoming hosts: Jan. 5 Fellowship Committee Jan. 12 Christian Ed Jan. 19 Mission Committee Jan. 26 Sunday Staff



UNION UCC NIGHT WITH THE PHANTOMS

SATURDAY, MARCH 22ND 7:05PM (DOORS OPEN AT 6:00PM) Tickets: \$27.00 each

ORDERS can be mailed or dropped at the church office or in the offering plate but MUST be in an envelope marked Phantoms Tickets.

TO ORDER TICKETS OR FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CONTACT STEVE KAREHA.

717-514-8881 or s.kareha@gmail.com

Cash, Check, or Venmo

(Make checks payable to Steve Kareha)

Bring your friends and family!

Presented by Union UCC Men's Group



25th Anniversary Basket Social March 29-March 30, 2025

Hosted by the Fellowship Committee

Tickets on sale beginning in January After worship & online

Questions? Contact Maria Beltz (wesmar92@icloud.com) or Debbie Romig (dromig180@gmail.com)

BASKET SOCIAL 2025

Tickets will be on sale beginning January 5, 2025 After worship services & Online

> \$5 per sheet (25 tickets) \$20 for 5 sheets

To purchase online & pay via Venmo visit: <u>https://forms.gle/</u> <u>p5CAcpY3N9jhdubo6</u>



\$30 cash or check to Union UCC or use our Venmo app Reservations required by 1/12, space is limited. Bring a roll of paper towels.

Complimentary glass of wine & snacks included

January

NO God First or

Union

Wednesdays at 📜 🎈



God 1st Wednesday and Wednesdays at Union in February:

2/5: Modern parenting & grandparenting: Key issues facing today's families
2/12: Avoid Getting Crispy: Burnout/Trauma/Stress
2/19: Sleep/Health/Community: How these topics intersect & brief discussion of diagnosis & treatments for sleep disorders
2/26: Managing Anxiety and Depression in the Winter Months Seminars led by St. Luke's Clinical Therapy Services

1st Wednesday: 5:30-6pm Supper, 6-7:15 pm Kids Choir & Adult seminars 7:15-7:30pm Closing Worship All other Wednesdays: Adults 6-730



New Year Blessing

May the New Year bless you with faith that guides your steps, lights your path, and fills your heart with hope and strength for the year ahead.

Silly Soek Sunday January 5th

FAITH

FORMATION

FOR CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Contact: Tiffany Lakatosh Email: dired@unionucc.org



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Wear your favorite silly socks on January 5th, and show them to Ms. Tiffany to get a special surprise.



JANUARY 19TH AT 11:45AM IN FELLOWSHIP HALL

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND. NO PAINTING EXPERIENCE NEEDED. WE WILL BE DOING A BEGINNER LEVEL CROSS PAINTING. EMAIL MS. TIFFANY AT DIRED@UNIONUCC.ORG







REGISTER USING THE QR CODE OR VISIT TPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/GO/10C0F4DA CA723A7FC1-53328664-NERF



Union UCC, Neffs Youth Group

"I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear"- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Happy New Year!!!

We did it! We made it to 2025! This should be celebrated! WOOHOO!!! I pray that everyone enters into the new year with good health and sense of adventure. We've got some good stuff for you and can't wait for you to join us! Look for sign-ups, emails, and all the fun in store for 2024!!



March 23

April 6

April 20

May 18

Youth Room

January 2025 Edition





YOUTH SUNDAY 2025 MARCH 16, 2025 Theme: TBD HS Seniors Preach, everyone is encouraged to participate!





Parkland CARES Food Pantry,

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on the journey of our food pantry, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support. Your generosity has played an essential role in our mission to alleviate hunger in our community, and we cannot thank you enough!

We are excited to share that we are growing and expanding our pantry to increase our capacity to serve even more Parkland families. As we move forward, we invite you to continue this journey with us. Your support is crucial as we work to make a more significant impact to the community.

Thank you once again for your kindness and commitment to our cause. Together, we can create a community where no one has to go hungry.

2025 Envelopes

The 2025 envelope packets will be mailed out in mid January. If you have not received yours, please contact the church office. Members on the e-giving program do not receive envelopes.

Please use the initial envelope in your packet to offset the cost of printing and mailing the envelopes. Please continue to support the mission and ministries of Union UCC by bringing your envelopes to Sunday Services, or by mailing them to the church office. Thank you for sharing your gifts to God.

Contact Barbara in the office to sign up for the e-giving program or to make changes to your current account.

From the Mission Committee

Blanket Sunday Coming Soon

You're changing lives around the World !! Through your support of the Church World Services Blankets Program, you are helping people faced with difficult challenges, whether due to a natural disaster or another sort of emergency.

Thank you for your support of the upcoming Blanket Sunday in February 2025. You are helping to spread God's love to many families around the country and the world.

Souper Bowl Sunday - Feb 09, 2025

Let's get ready for some football during the Super Bowl. Let's get ready to buy and donate canned soup during our annual SOUPER Bowl celebration. Let's start this new year with a huge donation of SOUP for the Northern Lehigh Food Bank, start shopping NOW, God's team is counting on YOU.

Thank you for fighting hunger and being on the winning SOUPer Bowl team.

Reverse Advent Baskets

Thank you to all who filled the Reverse Advent Baskets during the recent Advent and Christmas Season. Your donations of groceries, toiletries, gloves, socks, mittens, children's books & crayons weighed close to 1,000 pounds. All donations have been sorted and distributed to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank, Lehigh Conference of Churches, and Sixth Street Shelter.

Angel Tree Program

Thank you to all who were special Christmas Angels in December by supporting the **Bethlehem Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.** Gifts of toys, clothing, gift cards, five bicycles, and more were provided to 65 children in the Bethlehem area. Spreading the Christmas Spirit is **one of Union UCC's greatest gifts to the community.** Blessings to all who shared in spreading God's Love to the World.

Yearly Donation Statements:

Anyone who has given over \$200 will receive their statements by the last week of January. If they wish to receive a statement for less than this amount to please contact me at <u>financialmanager@unionucc.org</u> or 610-767-6961.

Monday, December 16, 2024 Consistory Actions:

This item was approved by email vote since the last Consistory meeting on November 18, 2024:

Approval to host the Feed My Starving Children packing event the weekend of 10/10-10/12/25

Monday, December , 16, 2024, Consistory Actions:

These notes reflect items that needed action and approval by Consistory. Standing and routine items are reported by Committees and Staff throughout the newsletter. A complete copy

of the Consistory minutes can be found in the church office.

Requested approval:

Request from the Nominating Committee to approve the following candidates for Consistory terms:

For a second term - Debbie Romig, Gloria Toner and Phil Wehr

For the Class of 2028 - Doug Brace, Jon Fabian, Karen Nuschke and Kim Pentland

For Funds of Lasting Gifts - Larry Todd and AJ DiPaolantonia

The above request was approved unanimously.

Union UCC is holding a 5-session book study: "Grieving with Hope"

> Mondays, monthly, 6-7:30pm 1/13, 2/10, 3/10, 4/14, 5/12 Memory room, 2nd floor.

Please RSVP to Pastor Carrie to secure your spot and receive the free book.



Community - Wide yard Sale

SAVE THE DATE Saturday, May 31, 2025 8am -1pm Union UCC Grove

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



Relevant • Engaged • Growing

Our Leadership Planning Team (LPT) and Consistory continue to meet on the 3rd Monday of the month at Consistory meetings and on Saturday mornings about every other month.

We have called Alloy5 to be the architect firm to help us create a plan for renovating Memorial Hall. They have impressed us with their ability to weave our core values, vision, and mission into their design ideas.

The Capital Campaign team is continuing with interviews to choose a firm that will lead us through a feasibility study to discern next steps for a capital campaign. The Marketing Team has launched our logo! Look around to see and hear more. The Mental Health and Wellness Team - is now called CREW -Connection, Resources, Education, Wellness. The Summer 2025 Grove Event Team is booking bands and food trucks for our next grove adventure!

Please talk to one of us if you'd like to join one of these teams or to learn more: Pastor Kris, Pastor Kayli, Pastor Carrie, Consistory Officers: Eric Minnich, Don Penrod, Janice Metzger, Marianne Kitzmiller, and the LPT/Consistory

From the Property Committee

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Once again, December brought us a beautifully decorated sanctuary for everyone to enjoy for the Advent and Christmas season. The entranceways were decorated, and the manger scene greeted everyone who passed by our church.

Once again, the Lights in the Grove brought Love and Joy to the community each night. Mr & Mrs Santa Clause also paid a visit to

Once again, the Mission and Christian Education committees organized many and varied missions to provide Love and Joy to families in the local communities. The Christmas spirit was shared to many people, thanks to YOU.

Once again, the Christmas message was spread through words, prayer, songs, and music. Christ is coming, Christ is born, Joy to the World.

Once again, special musical concerts were held for the community in our sanctuary. The power of music and song is strong during the Christmas season, such a joy to hear the voices and talents of all of the musicians.

Once again, let's give Thanks to all who shared their time, talents, and treasures to make the Christmas Season so special at Union UCC.

Peace to all in 2025.



Here's a paper copy you can hand to a pastor or mail to the church office. Descriptions are at https://www.unionucc.org/ministries-committees/

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Which Committees or groups are you interested in?

(Circle all that apply)

Consistory

Christian Education

Welcoming

Fellowship

Worship

Financial Leadership Team

Mission

Property and Maintenance

Helping Hearts/Communion Ministers

Youth Group

Children's Ministry

Choirs and Worship Music

Which volunteer opportunities are you interested in? (Circle all that apply)

Organizing the effort to sell Union UCC merchandise like shirts, hats, mugs, and pens.

Donating a baked good to a church event.

Newsletter Assembly (weekday)

Staying in touch/visiting with those who have health challenges or are unable to attend worship.

Volunteering at a grove event with set up, food serving, ticket sales, clean up.

Family Promise Volunteer - meals, hosting supper, overnight.

Or you have another idea?

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

That United Church of Christ tagline, for me, is the root to what I believe an open and affirming (ONA) congregation is. Whether a church or somewhere else, would you go somewhere that you do not feel welcome?

Being an ONA congregation is more than just opening our minds and hearts to people that are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ). It is also about accepting and including people that are of every age, gender, race, national origin, faith background, marital status, family structure, physical, cognitive, or emotional abilities, economic, educational, and social statuses, and political or cultural backgrounds. In short, EVERYONE!

As Union concludes the "Do Unto Others" worship theme from September, we need to continue to practice its characteristics - kindness, respect, love, humility, compassion - in our everyday lives with everyone.

Stay turned in early 2025 for opportunities at Union to learn more about being an ONA congregation.

🛡 🤍 Douglas Brace - doug@dougbrace.com 🔍 💙 🖤



Thank you for your faithful generosity and for all that you do to help our church be **Relevant • Engaged • Growing**

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 Union United Church of Christ, Neffs, PA and register your information to contribute. VENMO @unionuccneffs or QR code. Make a donation or pay for a fundraiser or event. Complete "What's this for?"

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.

Contact John Harting (610-799-2508) or Don Penrod (610-972-8719) or Pastor Kris for questions or to discuss legacy and estate gifts to Union UCC.



Electronic Giving



Vanco Mobile



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.

- 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.

Our next gathering for new members is on Sunday, February 16th at 11:30-12:30 in Memorial Hall where coffee hour is. You would be received in church on Sunday, February 23rd at 8am or 10:30am worship. 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: <u>https://</u> <u>docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeXM2pHU6Pnwd020Rpm-o8BV6-eWUoxPe2fxpZnBawImYeZ-g/</u> <u>viewform</u> 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.



UPCOMING HOSTING WEEK: February 16-23, 2025

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



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

Grace Schneck passed on November 23, 2024. Services were held on December 6, 2024.

Brian Rex passed on November 28, 2024. Services were held on December 4, 2024.

Ralph Ebert passed on November 28, 2024. Services were held on December 5, 2024.

Keith Grim passed on December 6, 2024. Services were held on December 11, 2024.







Attention all Scouts!

We would love to include you in worship and recognize your work as a Scout. You can part of any troop in order to participate in Scout Sundays this year. Mark your calendars and let Pastor Kris know if you are interested.

Feburary 2nd Boy Scout Sunday March 9th Girl Scout Sunday

Union UCC Staff

Rev. Kris P. Snyder Senior Pastor Cell Phone: 610-657-6007 pastorkris@unionucc.org

Rev. Kayli Freeman Associate Pastor pastorkayli@unionucc.org

Carrie Beleno Pastor of Visitation vispastor@unionucc.org

Tiffany Lakatosh Faith Formation Minister for Children & Families dired@unionucc.org Marissa Haney Church Administrator administrator@unionucc.org

Blake Hoppes Minister of Music Blake.charger@gmail.com

Ori Handwerk Facility Caretaker Caretaker@unionucc.org

Barbara Carinci Financial Manager financialmanager@unionucc.org Church Office: 610-767-6961 Fax: 610-767-7128

PO Box 66, 5550 Route 873 Neffs PA 18065-0066 www.unionucc.org

Preschool Office: 610-767-5327 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 Lakatosh	ext.	27
Barbara Carinci	ext.	32
Music Office	ext.	26



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Financial Report

-						
Fiscal Year	Operating Fund	Designated Funds	Grand Total All Funds			
7-1-2024	-\$4,682.00	\$29,197.00	\$24,515.00			
Income	\$209,006.00	\$43,063.00	\$252,069.00			
Expenses	\$196,143.00	\$45,844.00	\$241,987.00			
10-31-2024	\$8,181.00	\$26,416.00	\$34,597.00			

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 <u>PastorKris@unionucc.org</u> to sign up. See page 14 for more information.

<u>Dual Member Status</u> 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 12 and March 30, 2025**. 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 <u>administrator@unionucc.org</u>. 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 <u>administra-</u> tor@unionucc.org.

There is information on our website, forms to complete are downloadable. More information on the site: <u>http://www.unionucc.org/resources</u> 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.