



**With Glad Hearts
April 27, 2025
8:00am & 10:30am
Easter Joy Continues!
Receiving New Members**

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.

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.***

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

Lay Readers: 8am Rosalie Snyder, 10:30 Lucille Kuhns

Ushers: 8am Cliff James, Carol James, Michael Haftl, Daniel Haftl

10:30 Eric Minnich, Gene Thrash, Jason Klinger, Marlene Blose, Dale Blose, Kim Pentland, Andy Dyszel

Greeters: Geoff & Sara Jane Brace, Andy & Jan Dyszel

Sound: Dawn Dengler

Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number... — Acts 2

The life and death of Jesus had one strong message that was both overt and inherent: love one another. The heart of the matter was love. Time and again we hear Jesus offer the disciples a post-resurrection message of empowerment to give to the world what he had given to them. This Easter Season we will encourage one another to truly live out the heart of the matter.

SIGNS OF LOVE

Please send Pastor Kris (pastorkris@unionucc.org) or Pastor Kayli (pastorkayli@unionucc.org) pictures of you and your friends or family or pets or favorite scenery with their hands in the heart position. We'd like to show them in our slides in worship and on Facebook so that we can see each other, give thanks for each other, and pray for each other.

Prelude Music

Behold the Lamb Dottie Rambo

Blake Hoppes

Welcome to Union UCC!

Welcome & Announcements

PRAYERS WITH A PASTOR

During the last hymn and the postlude you are invited to come to the railing if you would like to have a pastor pray with you or to receive a blessing.

Pastors will offer a blessing of anointing oil on your hand or forehead.

Be sure to get a prayer stone (or worry or heart stone or cross) at the door when you arrive. You can keep it in your pocket and bring it back with you each week or get a new one. <3

Call to Worship

Leader: Easter is not just a day. It is a whole season of time when we remember that Jesus' Spirit lives on in each one of us. In the Bible, the early church was described in this way: *"Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people."* (Acts 2: 46-47a)

So over the next few weeks, we are following our ancestor's traditions. The earliest Christians spent time in the temple, but also worshiped in their homes before they had churches, and so this season we meet around tables both here at the church and at home, taking time to worship and talk about what is important—the "heart of the matter"—connecting with each other through the Spirit that makes us one in love.

"Worry Stone" or "Heart Stone" Invitation

L: In the account of the resurrection in the Gospel of Matthew, after the stone is rolled away from the tomb, the angel sits on the stone and gives the women this message, "Don't be afraid." Throughout the Season of Easter, we invite you to use a "worry stone," which is a stone you carry about with you to rub when you are feeling anxious or worried or to just remember you're not alone.

You can get a stone or cross here at church or you can find your own stone or even paint a stone. It will remind you of this angel's message which Jesus then repeats, "Do not be afraid."

If you're have your stone, hold onto it now. Or get one as you leave today or look for one this week for next Sunday.

Opening Act of Centering Our Hearts as One

We are going to center our hearts as one to begin.
Let's take a deep breath together.

I invite you to place your hand on your heart and
let's lightly tap together in a slow heartbeat rhythm

Holy Living God,
Heartbeat of Creation,
help us to take this time to center on you,
for you made us,
you gave us life,
and you continue to be with us
every moment...

every breath...

every step.

Hear this assurance from God:

Tune: Amazing Grace

ALL Sing:

**Be still, O heart, you're not alone,
your beat is shared with me.**

**Come now, and calm, and center here,
you're mine, secure and free.**

Let's take another deep breath, making sure our shoulders
and any tension we feel in our bodies is letting go with the
breath.

Let's take another one.

Let us pick up our heart stone, sometimes called a "worry
stone," and let our touch on its surface remind us that God's
touch is within us, between us, and around us.

As close and real as this object is in our hands right now,
is how close Love is to us always.
Let us imagine letting go of our worries for now into God's
heart of love.
We offer a prayer song of letting go:

ALL Sing:
Into your care, we offer now,
our worries, fears and strife.
We turn to you and know you're near–
Your light, our love and life.

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

I invite you to share the peace of Christ with those around you, [remembering to greet those online with a wave to the camera].

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

***Hymn** In the Bulb There Is a Flower
#433 Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal
In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter
there's a spring that waits to be,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

There's a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
There's a dawn in every darkness,
bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,

Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

**In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity,
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.**

Please be seated.

10:30 Children's Time

Kids, as you come forward and sing with us please find 3 people to shake hands with or wave to.

ALL SING:

**Shake another hand shake the hand next to you
Shake another hand and sing this song
Shake another hand shake the hand next to you
Shake another hand and sing, sing this song.**

Al la la la la la le luia

Al la la la la le luia

Al la la la la la le luia

Al la la la LA le luia

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. They will return to worship before it's over and if not, please pick up your children in Room 100.

If you want your child to stay in worship with you, please let them know.

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

**Keeping the Faith as Members and Disciples of Union
UCC for 20-39+ Years**

Video Highlight: Dave & Dolly Mulcahy

Welcoming New Members

The Mission Statement of Union UCC

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 a dedicated Christian discipleship through worship, education, pastoral care, fellowship, and outreach within our community and the world.

Welcome and Reception (ALL in unison)

ALL: We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

Greeting of Christian Love

New members being welcomed today:

Maria and Dale Brace

Victor Hunsicker

Joanna DiFiore

WECLOME HOME! ~ John Roedel

Left Side:

You are somebody's front porch to God.

You are someone's doorway to mercy.

You are the world's threshold to kindness.

You are my entrance to letting go of regret.

Right Side:

No pressure, but...

**Your life is a gateway to peace
for both strangers and friends alike.**

Whether you realize it or not...

ALL:

**Empathy has chosen you to turn your
heart into a welcome mat for others.**

This is the purpose of your life...

**To let your existence become a candlelit veranda of hope
for the rest of us to gather on to hold each other during the
long dark night.**

Leader:

We are somebody's front porch to God.

Welcome home to God, welcome home to Union.

8:00am Music Offering

I know that My Redeemer Lives Howard Hughes

Heritage Choir

Contemporary Reading

During this series we will use readings from Mark Nepo's book *More Together Than Alone: Discovering the Power and Spirit of Community in our Lives and in the World*. He draws from historical events, spiritual leaders, and the natural world to show how, in every generation, our tendency is to join together to accomplish our greatest achievements, from creating education and preserving the arts to providing clean drinking water.

"In the Hindu Upanishads, there's a passage that speaks to how those who become wise lose their names in the Great Oneness, the way rivers lose their names when they flow

into the sea. In this transformation from the solitary to the communion, there's a mysterious physics that each generation has to relearn regarding what is possible when we can work together...Ours is a complicated era, and so we need every resource and example of heart and resilience we can find. It is both comforting and challenging to realize that no one person can wrestle from the Earth the song of how we can survive together, and no one voice can sing that chorus. We need each other more than ever."

Scripture Reading

John 20: 19-22

The Easter Season is a time to proclaim that at the heart of our Christian faith, we are called to live our lives in the belief that death is not the final word. This is why Christians are called "Easter People." The tomb becomes the womb of new life. What would we do differently if we really believed that we are loved beyond all endings? That there was nothing to fear?

Today we imagine Jesus at our "right hand," counseling us throughout our days, with these words, "Peace be with you." This is what he did when he appeared to the disciples after his resurrection. They were in a locked room, fearing for their lives. Sound familiar? Let's let Jesus speak these words to us as well. Here is how the story from the Gospel of John goes:

Reader: "It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid... Jesus came and stood among them. He said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As [Abba,

God] sent me, so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit." - John 20: 19
-22

Two things Jesus wanted the disciples to have in their moment of fear was peace and the Spirit. "Taking a breather" is one way to see what Jesus offered to them. He wanted them to take his breath so that they would feel his spirit living in them.

The Heart of the Matter Message Pastor Carrie Beleno

Breaking Open Our Lives with Each Other

Leader: Our theme scripture says, "they ate their food with glad and generous hearts." One way we can be glad and generous is to share about how we are finding strength, hope, love and peace in these days. This is part of "breaking bread" with each other as we break open our hearts to one another as well. This week, since Jesus has said he wants us to feel peace, let's talk about peace.

Think about what sights, sounds, words, and actions, (nature, birds, taking a walk, for example) are things that act in your life as a "voice in your ear" that says,
"Peace be with you."

When have you felt peace this week?

Or if you haven't experienced much peace, what do you have in your memory as something that brings you peace?

Let's take some time to find someone you're sitting near to share your responses.

We'll take a few minutes to talk.

Breaking Open our Hearts with God

Leader: When we gather, we believe that we can bring people not with us closer by lifting up their names in prayer. Take a moment and say out loud the names of people you wish were right there next to you. As we name them, they are present with us in our hearts.

We also want to call to mind, the people we cannot name, whose names we do not know. But we know they need our prayers and God's comfort.

For those who are grieving.
For those who are sick and recovering.
For those who are caregivers.
For those who are feeling alone and isolated.
For those who are struggling to find friends,
food, and comfort.
For those who are afraid.
For this church.
For this community.
For people and leaders around the world.

Leader: Let us take another breath of Spirit as our "Amen."
We know that God sends out our prayers and the Spirit,
Breath of God, is blowing from within us outward, as a Spirit
of Compassion and Presence.

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.**

All Sing:
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me
Melt me mold me
Fill me use me
Spirit of the Living God
Fall fresh on me

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



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neffs, Pennsylvania

OFFERING

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Easter Offering.
We raised \$2,957.15 which will be divided and given to The
Chemo Bag and World Central Kitchen.

Be an ambassador for Union UCC and tell your friends and
neighbors about our church!

Thank you for your prayers, participation, and financial
support which helps us be a church that is relevant,
engaged, and 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 our church Union United Church of
Christ, Neffs, PA and register your information to
contribute.

• **Venmo @unionuccneffs** Make a donation or



Electronic Giving



Vanco Mobile

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

Let There Be Praise Dick & Melodie Tunney
Blake Hoppes

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

*** Offering Response** Every Step of the Way
#66 Sing! Prayer and Praise

All Sing:

**Help me do the justice to be done today.
Help me love kindness in all I do and say.
Help me walk humbly with you, O God I pray
Every step of the way, every step of the way.**

PRAISE GOD!

The Easter Season is a time of celebration, no matter what is happening in the world and in our lives, there are things to be grateful about. Let's start with this affirmation, repeating after me:

We know Jesus is present among us...
in our church and in our homes...
We will not let fear be louder than love...
but with glad hearts and rejoicing souls...

we will sing God's praise...
for we are Easter People...!

HAVE GOODWILL

Let's decide to send some energy out to the world that needs it! What message does the world need? Perhaps you will decide to create a way to let more and more people know the message of Christ, "You are not alone. I am here. Peace be with you." What can we do to create more peace in our household, in our family, in our relationships with those we cannot be with right now? How can we offer peace to those who are working so hard right now? How can we offer peace to those who feel no peace or comfort? Make your own plan today.

Benediction

(based on Psalm 16)

As we close this time together, remember:
God is always with you. No matter what you face,
no matter what trials or hardships come your way,
God is right beside you, whispering "Peace be with you,"
guiding and directing your path.
So do not live in fear, but in joy.
Take heart! This is the heart of the matter.
Amen.

SIGNS OF LOVE

Please send Pastor Kris (pastorkris@unionucc.org) or Pastor Kayli (pastorkayli@unionucc.org) pictures of you and your friends or family or pets or favorite scenery with your hands in the heart position. We'd like to show them in our slides in worship and on Facebook so that we can see each other, give thanks for each other, and pray for each other.

PRAYERS WITH A PASTOR

During the last hymn and the postlude you are invited to come to the railing if you would like to have a pastor pray with you or to receive a blessing.

Pastors will offer a blessing of anointing oil on your hand or forehead.

***Hymn Day of Peace #287 Spirit & Song**

**I dream of a morning in springtime, bright with sunshine.
And here in the heart of this very land,
God's delight, hand in hand.**

**I know there will be a day of peace.
For this, let us all work and pray.**

**I dream of a winter's night, fair and calm,
streets are dark, but all are home,
and weary, but thankful, for another day;
chance to work, love and pray.**

**I know there will be a day of peace.
For this, let us all work and pray.**

**O peace, when will I see you?
O peace, will I ever see your dawning?
O peace, in a world of pain and longing,
your day is not today. And yet,**

**I dream of a night when all children slumber safe,
warm and fed,
and rise to a day of possibility,
each one loved, each one free.**

**I know there will be a day of peace.
For this, let us all work and pray.**

Oh, let us work, oh let us pray, oh, let us live for peace.

Oh, let us work, oh let us pray, oh, let us live for peace.

Postlude Music

The Heart of Worship Matt Redman

Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
Last Week	\$16,821.00	8 AM	130
Calendar Year 2025 (Jan.-March)	\$ 93,711.00	10:30 AM	277
Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-March)	\$ 115,296.00	Online Views	467
Change from Last Year	-18.7%	Sunday School	
Budget FY 2024-25 (July-March)	\$ 312,910.00	God First	25
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-March)	\$ 318,241.98	Faith on Tap	30
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	1.7%	Breathe	15
Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes		2025 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
		Last Week:	\$, 1000lbs
		Total YTD:	\$700, 1870lbs

Easter Mission: \$2,957.15

Presentations to the Glory of God

In memory of Walt Disney

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.

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