



Kept In Our Hearts
May 25, 2025
8:00am & 10:30am
Memorial Sunday

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 Carol Pope, 10:30 Tami Wassum

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: Mark & Debbie Daluisio, Andy & Jan Dyszel

Sound: Patrick Sorg

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

"Freedom Hymn" with "A Mighty Fortress"

Dino Kartsonakis, Bill George, Martin Luther

Blake Hoppes

Welcome to Union UCC!

Welcome & Announcements

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: We continue with our Easter Season because Easter isn't just one day. This week we are invited to keep Jesus' commandments—to love one another is to keep each other in our hearts. Every week we remind ourselves why we gather. We are forming a habit of spending time together, breaking bread together, praising God together and having goodwill for all the people. In the account of the early church, they did just that:

*“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)*

As we share this worship weekly, here and at home, we will stay connected. At the “heart of the matter,” we are connected 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

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 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.**

***Opening Hymn #681 Let There Be Peace on Earth**
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

Let there be peace on Earth
And let it begin with me
Let there be peace on Earth
The peace that was meant to be
With God our Creator
We are family
Let us walk with each other
In perfect harmony

Let peace begin with me
Let this be the moment now
With every step I take
Let this be my solemn vow
To take each moment
And live each moment

**With peace eternally
Let there be peace on Earth,
And let it begin with me**

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.**

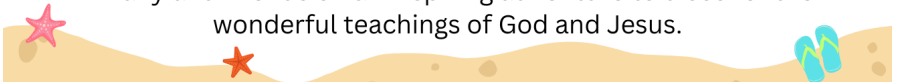
**Al la la la la la le luia
Al la la la la le luia
Al la la la la la le luia
Al la la la la LA le luia**



KIDVENTURE SPRING & SUMMER

May 25th to August 31st

During the 10:30am service, children are warmly invited to join Ms. Tiffany and friends on an inspiring adventure to discover the wonderful teachings of God and Jesus.



Resuming September 14: 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.

Returning September 7: 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.

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:

**Ruthann Bachman, Cody Groller, Gabriela Groller,
Patty Monroe**

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.

Music Offering God of Our Fathers - George Warren

Instrumental Ensemble:

Lucas Maxwell

Connor Maxwell

Andy Dyszel

Mike Baer

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 Africa, Osusu is a community practice of pooling savings and sharing those monies with those of the group who are in need. Members will give what they can, as little as one dollar or as much as a hundred dollars a month. The communal pot is then given to one member of the group. The next month the communal pot will be given to the next member of the group. This will continue till everyone in the group receives the pot. Then the cycle will begin again. Such communal sharing rises out of a belief that each person's survival is tied to everyone else.

So what do we model and what do we imitate? Again, we're brought back to the core question: Are we in this together or are we fighting to make it alone? What do we place value on and what do we pass on to our children: that sharing or hoarding is the way to survive? It's a strange truth that those with less tend to share more. Perhaps because once we've suffered, we understand and feel each other's fate more easily.

We so desperately need the balm and care of community. How do we undo these tangles? How do we recover our common sense of living? What skills are necessary to find each other and to feed each other? What can we do in our day-to-day lives to reconnect and share some of what we have?

Scripture Reading

The resurrected Jesus tells his disciples that the Spirit will be with them when he is gone.

“If you love me and obey the command I give you, I will ask the One who sent me to give you another [Companion], another Helper to be with you always—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept since the world neither sees nor recognizes... but you can

recognize the Spirit because the Spirit remains with you and will be within you. Hear these words from the gospel of John, chapter 14, verses 15 to 21.

I won't leave you orphaned; I will come back to you. A little while now and the world will see no more; but you'll see me; because I live, and you will live as well. On that day you'll know that I am in God, and you are in me, and I am in you.

Those who obey my commandments are the ones who love me, and those who love me will be loved by Abba God. I, too, will love them and will reveal myself to them."

Doing the "right thing" is something we try hard to do. Sometimes doing the right thing is difficult and means that we make sacrifices to make sure we do not harm others. We do it because love is the commandment we live by. In this excerpt from an early church letter, we hear the apostle encourage the people to always be ready to share from their hearts about the source of hope that is in them—Jesus Christ. This reading is from 1st Peter, chapter 3, verses 13 to 16a.

Now who will harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you do suffer for doing what is right, you are blessed. Do not fear what they fear, and do not be intimidated, but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.

How do we "sanctify Christ as Lord" in our hearts? To "sanctify" something is to set it apart as holy. Holiness

resides within each one of us. It calls us to see holiness in others. It calls us to do the right thing in the name of Love, even when the right thing isn't easy. Sometimes the right thing, and the hardest thing, is to follow the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. We often focus about loving our neighbor, but we also must hear the second part... love ourselves. The Spirit is in us, Jesus says, and to love ourselves is to love God, to love the Jesus in each of us, and to love the Spirit that is our Companion and Helper.

The Heart of the Matter Message Pastor Kris

***Hymn** #682 A Song of Peace
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**This is my song O God of all the nations
A song of peace for lands afar and mine
This is my home the country where my heart is
Here are my hopes my dreams my holy shrine
But other hearts in other lands are beating
With hopes and dreams as true and high as mine**

**My country's skies are bluer than the ocean
And sunlight beams on cloverleaf and pine
But other lands have sunlight too and clover
And skies are everywhere as blue as mine
O hear my song Thou God of all nations
A song of peace for their land and for mine**

**This is my prayer O Lord of all earth's kingdoms
Thy kingdom come on earth Thy will be done
Let Christ be lifted up till all shall serve Him
And hearts united learn to live as one
O hear my prayer Thou God of all nations
Myself I give Thee let Thy will be done**

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. In this week’s scripture, we are encouraged to obey Christ’s commands, which is to love God, to love neighbor, and to love ourselves.

What have you done lately to honor the holy in you—
to love yourself, and take care of yourself?
Have you witnessed people doing the right thing for others?
Or if you can’t think of something from this week,
what do you have in your memory as
something or someone
that showed the Christ in them?

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 here with you today or who are on your mind and heart. As we name them, they are present with us in our hearts and in God’s heart.

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 \$3,185.00 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.)



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.

• **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.



Venmo

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

America the Beautiful Samuel A. Ward Arr. Mark Hayes
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. And my Spirit is your Helper!" What can we do to create more love in our household, in our family, in our relationships? How can we offer our hearts to others? How can we tell others that we have hope? 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.

The Companion is guiding and directing your path.

So, acknowledge your fear and your worry
and know it is as true and holy as any feeling,
including joy and hope and love.

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.

***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.**

A TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO SERVED

The congregation responded to the invitation to submit names of those who died during military service. We are grateful for all who serve or have served, but on the Memorial Day, we are especially mindful of those who died in military service and whose names are listed here:

PVT Larry W. Bachman, U.S. Army
Ensign Vernon G. Kern, U.S. Navy
W-O David P. Kuhns, U.S. Army-Air Force
SP4 Larry R. Lalan, U.S. Army
Richard Wehr, U.S. Army

All unknown soldiers who gave their lives in service

PRAYER FOR MEMORIAL DAY By Maren C. Tirabassi

ALL: God, we come with Taps in our hearts
remembering those who have died for others,
soldiers, sailors, air corps, in this country and others,
remembering those who risk life for others,
coast guard, firefighter, law enforcement,
both near and far away,
remembering those who go forth
in emergency response, disaster relief,
and aid to victims of war,
remembering those who witness for justice
in the face of opposition,
and remembering our own losses –
some, fresh wounds,
some, long-familiar sadnesses.
Day is come, not just one,
but a year full of dawns
in the east.
While some rest, we are blest,
given peace. Amen.

Leader: We remember that Memorial Day began when Confederate war widows decorated the far-from-home graves of Union soldiers.

ALL: We remember – and pray for those who grieve on all sides of a conflict.

Leader: We remember that Memorial Day also began at Charleston's Washington Race Course when newly freed slaves honored prisoners of war.

ALL: We remember – and pray for people everywhere who are seeking freedom or living with the loss of freedom.

Leader: We remember that May 30 was chosen for Memorial Day because it was one day that did not commemorate a particular battle.

ALL: We remember — and pray for a time when every day is an anniversary of peace.

Leader: We remember ANZAC Day, when Australians and New Zealanders memorialize not only those in combat, but nurses, stretcher bearers, conscientious objectors, and those who bear home front burdens.

ALL: We remember – and pray to be aware of the gifts of many in our common causes.

Leader: We remember Christmas Eve truces and paper cranes, amnesties and poppies, folded flags and the desperate need of veterans for gratitude made real in support.

ALL: We remember — and pray for a memorializing, not confined to a holiday but alive in the spirits of young and old, enlisted and civilian, brand new Americans and those with deep hometown-roots, people of every faith, no faith and people willing to leave their politics outside the door in order to embrace everyone. God, be with us as we remember. Amen.

Taps played by **Mitchell Roth**

Postlude Music

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Thomas O. Chisholm and William M. Runyan

Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$4,817.00
Calendar Year 2025 (Jan-April)	\$ 132,469.00
Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-April)	\$ 141,275.00
Change from Last Year	-6.2%
Budget FY 2024-25 (July-April)	\$ 359,440.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-April)	\$ 357,048.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-0.7%
Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	34
10:30 AM	65
Online Views	247
Sunday School	
God First	32
Faith on Tap	30
Breathe	10

2025 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	\$, lbs
Total YTD:	\$800, 2,195lbs

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.

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