



"Jacob sees Esau coming to meet him" by James Jacques Joseph Tissot

Prayer:

Prayers of Protection

Word:

Genesis 32:3-21

Luke 18:1-17

September 14th, 2025

8:00 am & 10:30am

Blessing of Students and School Personnel

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: 8 am– Michael Roth; 10:30 am– Doug Kuntz

Ushers: 8 am– Kerry Snyder, Tom Anderson, Larry Todd, Lorie Hackett;
10:30 am- Janice Metzger, Julie Johnson, Karen Nuschke, Ralph Gioielli, Connie Gioielli, Carol James

Greeters: Martha Lutz , Geoff & Sara Jane Brace

Sound: Doug Albert

Prelude Music

More Love to Thee, O Christ- William H. Doane

Blake Hoppes

Welcome to Union UCC!

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship:

This is a place of love,
of renewal,
of forgiveness,
of rebirth,
of generosity,
of peace,
of life.

In such protection
and hope
and presence
we worship.

Prayer of Adoration And Confession

We approach you, God, this day with grateful attention,
putting aside the worries and concerns
we ordinarily carry, focusing on your presence,
quieting all other voices but your own,
appreciating this time to spend in worship,
humbled and prayerful.

We give you thanks for this day,
for the joy of anticipating worship,
the opportunity to sing and pray,
to gather together focusing on you
just as your people have been doing for millennia.
And just as your people continue to do,
we ask for your mercy
when we regard others with contempt,

when we refuse to grant justice,
when we are afraid of others for a wrong we instigated and
have failed to put right.

Lord, we are sorry.

We are grateful for all the steadfast love
and all the faithfulness that you have shown.

We are grateful
you are not a vindictive God requiring appeasing,
but you are a forgiving God a God that calls us
to come into your presence as a little child.

Thank you. Amen.

Song

**ALL: There is room for all in the shadow of God's wing;
There is room for all sheltered in God's love.**

**And I rejoice and sing,
"My refuge and my rock, in whom I trust."
There is room for all,
There is room for all.**

#76 Sing! Prayer and Praise

Passing Love

The Love of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

I invite you to share the LOVE of Christ with those around you

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

*Hymn #423 Great Is Your Faithfulness
Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal

Great is your faithfulness, O God Creator;
with you no shadow of turning we see;
You do not change, your compassions, they fail not;
all of your goodness forever will be.

Refrain:

Great is your faithfulness!
Great is your faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see:
All I have needed your hand has provided—
Great is your faithfulness, God, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To your great faithfulness, mercy, and love.

Refrain

Pardon for sin and a peace so enduring,
your own dear presence to cheer and to guide,
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow—
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Refrain

Please be seated.

Children are invited forward to go with Miss Nikki

All Sing:

This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Returning September 14th- Kids are invited to the Education Hour and Faith Formation for All Ages – 9:15 10:15am on Sundays, ages 3 to grade 7. There will be activity bags available at 10:30 worship.

Returning September 21: 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 Miss Nikki 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.

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

AND A GIFT FROM THE PASTORS AND MS. NIKKI

If you brought your backpack or device, bring it forward with you. If you don't have it, we will bless you!

Prayer

Pastor: God of fresh starts and new beginnings, we bring ourselves, our big feelings, and our backpacks to you. In our backpacks, we carry blank pages, sharpened pencils, and pointy crayons, and in our hearts, we carry big feelings, unanswered questions, and hopeful expectations. There are endless possibilities of what this new year might bring— of what we might learn, who we might meet, and who we might become. God, our friend who is always with us, be with us through it all. Be with us as we ride the bus. Be with us as we walk. Be with us as we buckle seat belts, zip-up jackets, and tie shoes. However we get there, and whatever we wear, bless this journey into something new. For the grown-ups going back to school, With-Us God, be with them too. Thank you for our teachers, helpers, caregivers, and leaders, and for all they do to help us learn and grow. God, our friend who's full of wonder, fill their hearts and bless their hands.

Youth: God, bless these backpacks and the children and youth who carry them as they begin yet another year of

school. Give them peace when they feel nervous, focus-when they feel distracted, energy when they feel tired. Open their minds to the lessons they will learn both in and outside the classroom. Help them to make friends that build one another up, and be friends to those who need them. Guide them in making good choices as they grow in wisdom and maturity. Be ever-present with them in the classroom, on the school bus, on the playground, and at home, and may they feel your loving care in all they do.

Teacher: Lord, bless those in the ministry of teaching future generations. As they embark on a new school year, grant them energy, passion, discipline, and endurance for their daily tasks. Infuse their classrooms with an atmosphere of care and mutual respect, that all interactions there will be bathed in patience and understanding. Help their lessons to grow pupils in both knowledge and character, and help us all to support the work these teachers do building up our community and our future.

Youth: God, bless our donations of backpacks and school supplies and the children who will use them. Let these physical gifts be symbols of the love and support we give to the children of our community throughout the year. Help us to look upon every child in our community as one of our own, helping them to grow in character and knowledge.

Put your hand on the shoulder of someone next to you and say, “God loves you and so does your church! Have a great start to your school year!”

8:00 Music Offering Spirit of God Nancy Price & Don Besig
Heritage Choir

Reflection

Is it something that you feel you must do?

The feeling of protection in that moment:

is it a person, place or thing?

What makes you feel like you're safe?

A comfort blanket? Hiding in the shadow?

Sending someone else ahead?
Do you feel ostracized by the society?
Threatened? Marginalized? Belittled?

Hiding behind the scarlet curtain of protection,
the veil between the danger and the safety,
the veil between the seen and the unseen,
the veil between the known and the unknown.
The scarlet curtain, the place to hide who I am.

The scarlet curtain,
the place to hide from the puritan society
that condemns me.

But the scarlet curtain of protection is torn:
the sign of God's grace and redemption;
the sign of God's coming into the place of darkness;
the sign of God's coming into the otherworldly forces.
The violence of the world is getting out of hand.

Sometimes it's hard to trust that those
who are supposed to protect us,
will indeed protect us.

The scarlet curtain of protection,
whom God enfolds us within;
his protecting arms are fully open.
Take a moment in your life seeking out
and resting in God's safeguarding love.

Scripture Reading **Genesis 32:3-21**

Jacob sent messengers before him to his brother Esau in the land of Seir, the country of Edom, instructing them, "Thus you shall say to my lord Esau: Thus says your servant Jacob, 'I have lived with Laban as an alien, and stayed until now; and I have oxen, donkeys, flocks, male and female slaves; and I have sent to tell my lord, in order that I may find favor in your sight.'" The messengers returned to Jacob,

saying, "We came to your brother Esau, and he is coming to meet you, and four hundred men are with him." Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed; and he divided the people that were with him, and the flocks and herds and camels, into two companies, thinking, "If Esau comes to the one company and destroys it, then the company that is left will escape."

And Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your kindred, and I will do you good,' I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness that you have shown to your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I am afraid of him; he may come and kill us all, the mothers with the children. Yet you have said, 'I will surely do you good, and make your offspring as the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted because of their number.'"

So he spent that night there, and from what he had with him he took a present for his brother Esau, two hundred female goats and twenty male goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty cows and ten bulls, twenty female donkeys and ten male donkeys. These he delivered into the hand of his servants, every drove by itself, and said to his servants, "Pass on ahead of me, and put a space between drove and drove."

Luke 18:1-7

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my

opponent.' For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called for them and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it."

ALL Sing:

**Precious Lord, take my hand,
Lead me on, help me stand,
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
Thru the storm thru the night,
Lead me on to the light,
Take my hand, precious Lord,
Lead me home.**

Precious Lord #611
Hymns for the Family of God/Gold Hymnal

The Message

Prayers of Protection Pastor Kris

PRAYER

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:

**When your souls weary
When you find doubt
When you can't hear me**

Lay your troubles down
In your dark moments
When your hearts weak
Bring yourself broken
You will find me

Who wrote the rain
Who wrote the sun in
Who called your name
Where are you running
I'm gonna be there near or far
I'm gonna meet you where you are
Who wrote the rain
Who wrote the sun in

When you come thirsty
When the wells dry
When your souls dirty
I am by your side
When your faiths broken
When you can't see
With my arms open
You will find me

Who wrote the rain
Who wrote the sun in
Who called your name
Where are you running
I'm gonna be there near or far
I'm gonna meet you where you are
Who wrote the rain
Who wrote the sun in

Mm-mm-mm, mm
Mm-mm-mm, mm
Mm-mm-mm, mm
You will find me
Mm-mm-mm, mm
You will find me

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

OFFERING

When we worship outside in the grove the offering is collected at the welcome tables when you arrive or leave worship.

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-751X/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 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.

Please reach out to 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.



Electronic Giving



Vanco Mobile



Venmo

Music Offering: In Christ Alone ‘
Andrew Craig & Donald A. Koch
Blake Hoppes

Please stand in body or spirit.

***Offering Response**

ALL Sing:
Make us one, Lord,
Make us one;
Holy Spirit, make us one.
Let your love flow so the world will know
we are one in you.
(Repeat)

Make Us One Carol Cymbala

Prayer of Dedication

O God of Abraham and Sarah,
and God of Isaac and Rebecca,
the one to whom we belong,
we bring our offerings to you
out of gratitude for what we have been given.
But we do not give out of obligation or debt,
instead, it is out of deep appreciation
of your compassionate love and generosity.
These gifts are for the least and the lost,
for the outworking of your kingdom
here and now.
May we play our part. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

Sending

Pray always,
never losing heart,
God has sent messengers before us,
into each situation and space.

So go now,
spreading God's love,
renewal,
forgiveness,
generosity,
peace and life. Go out praising God,
share a song of deepest faith with the world.

***Hymm #370** O God, Our Help In Ages Past
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.**

**Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defense is sure.**

**Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.**

**A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone;
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.**

**O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.**

Postlude Music: He Giveth More Grace / No One Ever
Cared For Me Like Jesus Arr. Mark Hayes

Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$10,902.15
<i>Calendar Year 2025 (Jan-August)</i>	\$ 246,542.00
<i>Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-August)</i>	\$ 259,759.00
Change from Last Year	-5.1%
Budget FY 2025-2026 <i>(July-August)</i>	\$ 56,620.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date <i>(July-August)</i>	\$ 57,912.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	2.3%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	30
10:30 AM	83
Online Views	-
Sunday School	-
God First	-
Faith on Tap	-
Breathe	-

Presentations to the Glory of God

**September 7th Flowers: In memory of my wife Janet L. Snyder, and in honor of all who suffer from MS
-Ron Snyder**

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 Sarah to sign up for a certain date or to sponsor in honor or memory of someone.

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