



November 30th, 2025

King of Kings

Advent 1

Holy Communion

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– Tami Wassum

Ushers: 8 am– Phil Wehr, Ron Pope, Leoma Kern

10:30 am– Don Penrod, Scott Nagle, Tami Herzog Wassum,
John Fabian, Jennifer Haley, Carolyn Seyler

Greeters: Brynn & Jon Buskirk, Sally Saltzer, Devon Kuharik

Sound: Karl Klinger

Holy Communion

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace. Here, you will be served in your seats. Please wait to eat and drink until the Pastor invites you to do so.

A non-gluten option with juice is available in a prepackaged container on the bread tray. Both red wine and white grape juice are on the tray of cups. Please choose either.

AT HOME: Please find something to eat and drink that represents communion for you so that you can share in Communion.

GATHERING

Like the iconic figures gathered around the Christ Child in our nativity scenes, we gather together because we want to know Jesus more as we seek to bring his Reign of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love on earth.

Prelude Music

Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella Renaissance Carol
Blake Hoppes, piano

Welcome to Union UCC!
Welcome & Announcements

We often share parts of worship responsively.

Phrases in Bold = All Read

Phrases NOT in bold = Leader

We Gather at the Scene

Leader: In 1865, William Chatterton Dix penned a poem that would become the beloved Christmas-time favorite, “What Child is This?” This year for Advent and Christmas, we will be prompted by this carol to ask deeper questions of Jesus’ identity, “what child *IS* this?” When we look beyond the lullaby, what we discover is that the answers are much more complicated than the lilting lullaby tune conveys. The time of Jesus’ birth was fraught with difficulties. This is the scene into which Jesus was born. We are called, as his disciples, to enter the scene in the midst of our own complicated and difficult time in history, offering Hope as the Christ Child did.

**ALL SING: What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?**

Leader: The nature of humanity seems to point to the need for a "savior," especially when we feel things are out of control. People in the time of Jesus' birth were no different. They hoped for a new reality of communal wellbeing in the midst of corruption and violence. Peace only existed by definition of the empire. The collaboration of religious and state authorities for the sake of the rich and the demise of the poor was a hard reality for most.

Reader 1: We light this candle of Hope for those who need it most.

Reader 2: For all who search for a place to belong.

Reader 1: For all who are frightened by imposing forces.

Reader 2: For all whose future seems uncertain.

Reader 1: Our question for today at the scene of the nativity is this: "For what do we hope in our time that will be 'good news for ALL people?'"

Reader 2: What child IS this? This, this, is Christ the King who reigns with hope forever.

**ALL SING: This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary**

Prayer of Invocation

**ALL: Here, at the nativity of your birth,
give us the courage to face this moment
with humility and hope.**

**Open us to new understandings of
the unfolding story of your presence among us.
Show us the true meaning of the kingdom on earth
as it is in heaven.**

**We pray in the name of the Child,
the One Who Reigns in our hearts and lives.
Amen.**

Greeting

Peace be with you!

And also with you!

Let us pass the peace of Christ with one another.

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

***Hymn #168** Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to the glorious throne.**

Please be seated.

10:30 Children's Time

SONG

**ALL: Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

Skit with Miss Nikki and Pastors

**ALL: The cattle are lowing the Baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

Sundays at 10:30am: Worship Children's Church 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. 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.

Also on Sundays 9:15-10:15 am, ages 3 to grade 7. Kids are invited to the Education Hour with Ms. Nikki and Leaders.

Watch for God First Wednesdays and other events too!

We Hear the Story

Reader: We begin today with a scripture from the Hebrew Bible, Lamentations 3:46-57. In the book, *The First Advent in Palestine*, author Kelley Nikondeha says this,

"...grief work is the seedbed for Advent hope. We cannot grasp the fullness of the Advent narratives to come without attending to the brokenness of our world. Lament is how we name and honor what has been lost or taken from us by one empire or another." This lament comes from the time of Babylonian exile.

*Our enemies laugh at us with open mouths.
The snare and pit of the hunter lie ahead of us—
devastation and ruin!*

*Rivers of water run from my eyes
because my people are destroyed.*

*Tears flow continuously from my eyes,
refusing all comfort—
all of this while YHWH watches from the heavens.*

*My spirit is grieved as I see the fate of children in my city.
Those who became my enemies without provocation
chased and harangued me like a bird.*

Reader: Our second reading is from Luke 2:1-5. It places us in the scene before the arrival of the Holy Family when the manger in Bethlehem was simply serving as a place for the animals' feed.

In those days, Caesar Augustus published a decree ordering a census of the whole Roman world. This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All the people were instructed to

go back to the towns of their birth to register. And so Joseph went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to “the city of David”—Bethlehem, in Judea, because Joseph was of the house and lineage of David; he went to register with Mary, his espoused wife, who was pregnant.

Message
Pastor Kris

Books and Prayer Journals to reflect and learn more are on the table in the lobby.

Blessings on your journey to the manger.

Our Friday and Sunday class is reading - **The First Advent In Palestine: Reversals, Resistance, and the Ongoing Complexity of Hope** by Kelley Nikondeah

What Child IS This? Beyond the Lullaby A daily journal for Advent.

RESPONDING

Our faithful response is to praise God for this story of Emmanuel, God-With-Us, even and especially in the midst of difficulty, for God is indeed with us even still.

Prayers

Great Holy One
by Brian Wren and Susan Heafield

All Sung:
Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,
show us who You are in a human face.

Leader: In this moment of silent contemplation, we lift up our hopes for the world, for its people, for the kind of kin-dom embodied by the child who became the Christ

Time of Silent Contemplation

ALL Sung: Hidden one, how can we find you,
when our world is filled with pain,
and our praying is in vain?

**If we knock and get no answer,
and we cannot cope, help us still to hope.**

**Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,
show us who You are in a human face.**

Leader: Holy Living One,
Child of Hope,
Spirit of Benevolence,
we come to you today weary of the rulers of history,
weary of continued misguided power,
and the tenuous peace heralded through control
and perpetrated by violence.
We know you are with us,
for you came to our human story when we
needed your message so much.
We still do.

We ask, "what child is this that we follow, and who are we
in the scene of this unfolding story?"

As the manger waits for your arrival surrounded by the daily
needs of family and flock,
we again plead for your presence to break into our lives
and show us the light of hope.
And we ask for the courage to step into the scene,
preparing the way for your reign.

We give you thanks, O God, this day for...

We name our sorrow this day for...

We ask for your forgiveness this day for...

Be with us as we seek to be the Body of Christ in the world.
We pray this in the way you taught us, saying...

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 Sung: Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,
show us who You are in a human face.**

Celebrating and Blessing Our Members and Disciples Of 1-19 years

Video: Geoff and Sara Jane Brace

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

Christmas Mission Offering

You can support this by using the Christmas Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or a blank envelope marked - Christmas Mission, or donate electronically by using any of the options below and noting "Christmas Mission."

This year we are supporting:

HUGS Pediatric Cancer Foundation of the Lehigh Valley -

When a parent hears the words "your child has cancer," their world is forever altered. PCFLV can immediately step in and offer assistance and support to the entire family.

Allentown Rescue Mission - Since 1900, the Allentown Rescue Mission has rescued, rehabilitated, and restored men in crisis across the Greater Lehigh Valley. Their approach is both practical and spiritual, meeting immediate needs while addressing root causes through the power of Christ.

Invitation to the Offering

What gifts are adequate for the King of Kings, the Child of Hope? Our theme song says, "so bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own him." Whether what we have to give is simply the gift of our presence and gratitude, or if we are privileged with coffers of precious resources, we give what we can. In this way we "take ownership" of our role in the scene, in the unfolding story of Hope.

Let us give joyfully and generously, remembering that every gift we share is a testimony to God's enduring love.

Faith Commitment Cards – please complete and return your Faith Commitment Card by January 18 by placing it in the offering plate, or in the box at the sanctuary entrance, or by completing it with the link <https://bit.ly/faithcommitmen25-26>

Ambassadors (everyone!): Share our news, events, and spirit on social media and with your friends, family, and neighbors.

That's what keeps us relevant, engaged, and growing!

Watch for Union UCC merchandise soon!



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Relevant • Engaged • Growing



OFFERING

Dreaming God's Dream

NO GIFT TOO SMALL, NO DREAM TOO BIG.

Thank you for all the ways that you help us make God's dream a reality at Union UCC.

ELECTRONIC GIVING <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/home> or **QR code**. Single or ongoing donation with credit/debit card. Help 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 Sunday's offering plate with a member offering envelope or guest envelope (in the seat racks).

Please reach out to Don Penrod 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: Go Tell It on the Mountain
Blake Hoppes, piano

*** Offering Response**

ALL Sung:
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Holy Communion

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.

Here, you will be served in your seats. Please wait to eat and drink until the Pastor invites you to do so.

A non-gluten option with juice is available in a prepackaged container on the bread tray. Both red wine and white grape juice are on the tray of cups. Please choose either.

AT HOME: Please find something to eat and drink that represents communion for you so that you can share in Communion.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is good, Holy One, to give thanks to you,
always and everywhere.

You created us, you loved us into being,
you delivered us, and you spoke to us through prophets.
And then the time came for you to be with us, Emmanuel.

And so,
with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sung Response:

**Holy, holy, holy,
God of the heavenly host;
Heaven and earth are full, are full
of the majesty of your glory.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!
Blessed the one who comes in the name of our God,
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

BLACK HYMNAL #795 (Seraphic Hymn)

Mary's boy became a man, compassionate and kind.
He invited all to follow the way of the kin-dom,
the commonwealth of God.
Wherever he went, he tended to those who suffered.

His own suffering at the hands of the elite
gave birth to a movement of your Spirit, O God,
that would forge a new covenant of [hope/peace/joy/
love/light].
Jesus promised to be with us always,
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and cup. Bless this holy feast, transformed and transforming, so that as Christ becomes part of us, we might become part of him, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, symbols of God's work in this world. Amen.

BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ.

The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

SHARING THE MEAL

THE BREAD

8:00: Heritage Choir: That First Nowell (Incorporating "The First Nowell") Nancy Price and Don Besig

10:30 HYMN O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
And drive away the shades of night
And pierce the clouds and bring us light!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who ordered all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show
and teach us in its ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

Take and eat, the body of Christ, broken for you.

THE CUP

HYMN Angels from the Realms of Glory

**Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant Light;
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star;
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

Take and drink, this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you.

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, keep and preserve you unto eternal life.

COLLECTING OF CUPS

HYMN Hark The Herald Angels Sing

**Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;**

with th'angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"
Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King"

Please stand in body or spirit.

We Ask, We Answer

As we prepare to go into the world,
let us ask and answer the question we came with.

What child IS this?

This is the one born into a time when hope was hard.

What child IS this?

This is the one whose lowly status would send a message of
hope that alleviation of oppression is a holy endeavor.

What child IS this?

This, this is the "King of Kings" who shows us the way of true
hope for all people.

Benediction

May the Sovereign of All,
the Child of Hope,
the Spirit of Resistance to Injustice
be with you now and as you go.

Amen.

***HYMN** #193 O Come, All Ye Faithful
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him, born the King of angels!
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!**

**Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!**

**Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!**

Postlude Music Christmastime Michael W. Smith
Blake Hoppes, piano

Worship Theme: c. Worship Design Studio

Worship Design Team: Kathy Bonsell, Claire Kern, Deb Topp,

Pastor Kris, Nikki Pentland, Pastor Kayli

Sanctuary Decorations: Kathy Milander and Family, Maryann
Puia and Family

Outside Decorations: Worship Committee, Donna Christman and
Teresa Dalrymple

Special thanks to Ori Handwerk and Phil Wehr

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$6,535.64
<i>Calendar Year 2025 (Jan-October)</i>	\$300,763.00
<i>Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-October)</i>	\$320,290.00
Change from Last Year	-6.1%
Budget FY 2025-2026 (<i>July-October</i>)	\$ 118,500.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (<i>July-October</i>)	\$113,985.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-3.8%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	43
10:30 AM	125
Online Views	-
Sunday School	8
God First	30
Faith on Tap	38
Breathe	8

2025 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	175 lbs \$125
YTD	5,590 Lbs \$1,460.00

Christmas Mission: \$625.00

Presentations to the Glory of God

**In Memory of Walt Disney
Don Steffy**

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.