



**May 17th, 2026  
"Pardon"**

**GUESTS**, Welcome to our faith community. To learn more about us please visit our website at [www.unionucc.org](http://www.unionucc.org) or like us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/unionneffs](http://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- Sue Steinmann; 10:30am- Lucille Kuhns

### **Greeters**

Dale & Maria Brace, Martha Lutz, Deb Ross

### **Ushers**

8am- Edie Fella, Dixie Gross, Debbie Romig

10:30 am- Donna Christman, Deana Correll, Deb Wenner, Doug Brace, Marianne Kitzmiller, Brian Horwith, Maryann Puia

### **Sound**

Doug Albert

*“Prayer is a small fire lit to keep cold hands warm. Prayer is a practice that flourishes both with faith and doubt. Prayer is asking and prayer is sitting. Prayer is the breath. Prayer is not an answer, always, because not all questions can be answered. Prayer can be a rhythm that helps us make sense in times of senselessness, not offering solutions, but speaking to and from the mystery of humanity.”*

*- Pádraig Ó Tuama, Daily Prayer with the Corrymeela Community*

“Prayer is...” How would you finish this sentence? Prayer is such a personal, and often ambiguous, practice. Are we not “pray-ers” if we don’t start with “Dear God...” and end with “Amen?” Can prayer be simply an attitude, a heightened moment of attention to our surroundings, or a gasp of gratitude when beauty crosses our path? Yes and yes and yes. Prayer is many things. Even the disciples needed some coaching from Jesus about how to pray.

### **Prelude Music**

My Jesus, I Love Thee Adoniram J. Gordon (Tune: Gordon)  
**Blake Hoppes**

### **THE WHEN WE GATHER**

### **Welcome & Announcements**

**We often share parts of worship responsively.**

**Phrases in Bold = All Read**

**Phrases NOT in bold = Leader**

### **Threshold**

*Leader:* Today in our ongoing series on prayer, we continue by considering the role that forgiveness plays in our spiritual life and practices. Jesus included a line about forgiveness in the prayer he taught his disciples because getting right with each other is essential for our personal and communal wellbeing. Right relationship involves real honesty with God and with each other. “Pardon” is our focus about prayer today. How are we being invited to let go and find new ways with one another?

### **“Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying”**

#### **ALL SUNG:**

**Lord, listen to your children praying,**

**Lord, send your Spirit in this place.**

**Lord, listen to your children praying,**

**send us love, send us pow’r, send us grace.**

We arrive fully into this moment, Holy One.  
We open to sense your presence among us.

We hear you say,

**“Grace is always embracing you.”**

We need you, Jesus, to help us.  
We come to you as your first disciples did.

We hear you say,

**“Grace is always embracing you.”**

Spirit of Divine Love,  
come to us with your healing waters.

We hear you say,

**“Grace is always embracing you.”**

**ALL SUNG:**

**Lord, listen to your children praying,**

**Lord, send your Spirit in this place.**

**Lord, listen to your children praying,**

**send us love, send us pow’r, send us grace.**

*Leader:* For those who are new this week, please feel free to take the beads given to you home and bring them back for the remaining weeks of the series. If you are a visitor, please take them as a gift. I invite us to a few moments of silence. Feel your rhythms slow a bit. I invite you to simply hold the prayer beads in your hands. Begin to sense the mercy that God pours over you as present as the beads in your hands.

*Silence*

*Leader:* Take a deep breath [pause]. God's grace is deep and wide and can hold our honesty, the truths of our hurts and harms and our longing to be whole in ourselves and in community. Let us worship God, follow Christ, and revel in the Spirit of Presence in this place.

**The Peace**

*Leader:* No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,  
**ALL: You are welcome here.**

*Leader:* Welcome to this place and time of worship, prayer, and service.

**\*Please rise in body or spirit to greet each other with Christ's welcome and for the first song.**

**\*Hymn** Amazing Grace

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found;  
Was blind, but now I see.**

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed.**

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares,  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,  
And grace will lead me home.**

**When we've been there ten thousand years,  
Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we'd first begun.**

**Please be seated.**

**Music Offering** In The Name of the Lord  
Gloria Gaither, Phil McHugh & Sandi Patty  
**8 am, Heritage Choir; 10:30 am, Horizon Choir**

**10:30 Children's Time – Invite Children Forward**

**SONG** Alleluia, Praise Ye the Lord

**Allelu, allelu, allelu, alleluia!  
Praise ye the Lord!  
Allelu, allelu, allelu, alleluia!  
Praise ye the Lord!  
Praise ye the Lord! Alleluia!  
Praise ye the Lord! Alleluia!  
Praise ye the Lord! Alleluia!  
Praise ye the Lord!**

**Children's Church**– during 10:30am Worship for ages 3-grade 5. Kids start in worship with their family and are invited forward to 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 9:15-10:15am**, 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!**

## THE WHAT WE PROCLAIM

### Scripture Reading *Colossians 3: 12-14*

Reader: Our first reading is from the letter to the Colossians, chapter 3, verses 12-14. Here the author of the letter to the early Christian community at Colossae follows the amazing vision of a community that brings together and heals divides with the encouragement to bear with one another and forgive each other. We need to forgive each other, and ourselves in order to be a community that tells the truth about real differences.

*Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*

### Second Reading *Mark 11:25*

Reader: Our second reading from Mark 11:25 invites us to make forgiveness a part of every prayer we pray.

*"Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Abba in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."*

### The Message Pastor Kris

## THE WHERE WE RESPOND

### Prayer Song

#### ALL SUNG:

**You know my words before they're said.  
You know my need and I am fed.  
You give me life. You know my ways,  
my strength, my path, for all my days.  
my strength, my path, for all my days.**

## Prayers of the People

*Leader:* As we have done throughout this series, I invite you to lift up joys and concerns in short words or phrases so that we fill this sanctuary with our prayers. We pray in community so that we can move toward honesty and right relationship with each other. We are going to share our joys and concerns to bring them top-of-mind and then we will pray with our beads.

What are you thankful for today? We are going to just lift up words or phrases of thanksgiving. I am grateful for \_\_\_\_  
What are you grateful for?

What concerns you today? Who needs our prayers? I pray for \_\_\_\_  
Who else needs our prayers?

Like each bead on our prayer strands, each prayer is precious to the Holy One, even and especially the ones we cannot speak, but keep close in our hearts. For all these things spoken and the ones spoken in the quiet of our hearts, hear our prayers, O God. Amen.

### The Prayer of Pardon

*Leader:* Each week we have focused on a different kind of prayer with our prayer beads. Today, we have focused on forgiveness as a reciprocal prayer for well-being that reminds us that we are made to love each other. Forgiveness needs both our willingness to look in the mirror at our own part, and releasing ourselves from the grip of bitterness toward the other. We will take a time of quiet music to move through eight beads, reciting each line in our minds, letting each one sink into our hearts as we use our hands to move from one bead to another. You may have specific things to insert or you might just say, "forgive me" and "help me forgive" when you get to those lines. Do this on your own time, with the words in the quiet of your own heart

Bead 1: Open my heart.

Bead 2: Comfort my heart.

Bead 3: Give me the courage to look in the mirror of my heart.

Bead 4: Forgive me for \_\_\_\_\_.

Bead 5: Help me forgive \_\_\_\_\_.

Bead 6: Help me let go.

Bead 7: Give me freedom from my bitterness.

End Bead: I believe you can heal the hurt.

## 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:

**You know my words before they're said.**

**You know my need and I am fed.**

**You give me life. You know my ways,  
my strength, my path, for all my days.  
my strength, my path, for all my days**

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

### May Mission Collections

This year, the Mission Committee is partnering with Lehigh Conference of Churches by organizing a special collection of items needed for families in the local community. In honor of Mother's Day, we will be collecting baby supplies, feminine hygiene products, incontinence products, and more.

A special baby crib will be set up in the foyer for you to drop off donations during the whole month of May. Items needed are baby wipes, diapers, lotion, soap, feminine hygiene products, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner for women, and toilet paper. These may seem like simple little items but are truly needed to improve the lives of people and families that are served through Lehigh Conference of Churches.

Please share your love to the community and drop off these items during our special May mission collection.

### **Music Offering: Leaning on the Everlasting Arms**

Elisha A. Hoffman, Anthony J. Showalter

**Blake Hoppes**

**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





**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.

**Please stand in body or spirit.**

Electronic Giving



Vanco Mobile



Venmo



## Offering Response

### Doxology

*Tune: LASST UNS ERFREUEN*

**Like strands of beads, we offer gifts,  
that one by one, your love will lift.**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**That all may have just what they need,  
by this we're bless'd and truly freed.**

**Hear our prayers, God.**

**Be our guide, Lord.**

**Holy Spirit, come and fill us.**

**Alleluia!**

## THE WHY WE GO FORTH

### Benediction

Note: Take your prayer beads home to use throughout the week  
and then bring them back next week as we continue to learn  
new ways to pray.

And now hear this word of blessing:

God knows our words before they're said.  
knows our need and we are fed.  
God gives us life, knows our ways,  
our strength, our path, for all our days.  
our strength, our path, for all our days.

Go into the world with the assurance  
that God goes with you,  
Jesus prays for you,  
and the Spirit breathes through you, all your days.  
Let the people say, **Amen!**

## Shepherd Me, O God

Psalm 23

128

Marty Haugen

Refrain

Shep-herd me, O God, be-yond my wants, be-yond my fears, from

1-3, 5, Final to Vss 1-3, 5 4 to Verse 4  
 death in - to life. life.

Verses 1-3

1. God is my shep-herd, so noth-ing shall I want, I
2. Gen - tly you raise me and heal my wea - ry soul, you
3. Though I should wan - der the val - ley of death, I

1. rest in the mead-ows of faith - ful - ness and love, I
2. lead me by path - ways of righ-teous-ness and truth, my
3. fear no e - vil, for you are at my side, your

1. walk by the qui - et wa - ters of peace.
2. spir - it shall sing the mu - sic of your Name.
3. rod and your staff, my com-fort and my hope.

Verse 4

4. You have set me a ban-quet of love in the face of

4. ha-tred, crown-ing me with love be-yond my pow'r to hold.

Verse 5

5. Sure - ly your kind-ness and mer-cy fol-low me all the days of my

5. life; I will dwell in the house of my God for-ev - er - more.

## **Postlude: What a Friend We Have in Jesus**

Joseph M. Scriven, Charles C. Converse

**Blake Hoppes**

**Worship Theme: c. Worship Design Studio**  
**Worship Design Team: Deb Topp, Pastor Kris**  
**Prayer Beads: Thank you Susan Glosan!**

### **Prayer Beads**

Since the early church, Christians have used common, ordinary, everyday objects - including pebbles, knotted rope, crosses, and strings of beads - to help them in prayer. Prayer beads can be a wonderful prayer tool helping us feel connected to God and providing some structure for our prayer time.

**THIS WEEK'S PRAYER** If you are using a prayer bead strand with introductory beads before the seven smaller beads, simply move along those, settling and asking God to open your heart. If you have a prayer bead strand with a different number, that's ok. It doesn't matter... simply moving up and down your prayer bead strand with each line.

### **The Prayer of Pardon**

"Forgive us... and we forgive others..." Jesus includes this prayer of reciprocal wellbeing in the midst of his prayer template for a reason -we were made to love each other. But sometimes that proves to be difficult. The gift of release and peace from conflict needs both our willingness to look in the mirror at our own part, and releasing ourselves from the grip of bitterness toward the other.

Bead 1: Open my heart.

Bead 2: Comfort my heart.

Bead 3: Give me the courage to look in the mirror of my heart.

Bead 4: Forgive me for \_\_\_\_\_.

Bead 5: Help me forgive \_\_\_\_\_.

Bead 6: Help me let go.

Bead 7: Give me freedom from my bitterness.

End Bead: I believe you can heal the hurt.

*These prayers have been created by Dr. Marcia McFee,  
[www.worshipdesignstudio.com](http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com),  
for the series on prayer, "All My Days."*

**Using Beads to Talk with God** Prayer beads can help us feel comfortable talking with God. This might look like:

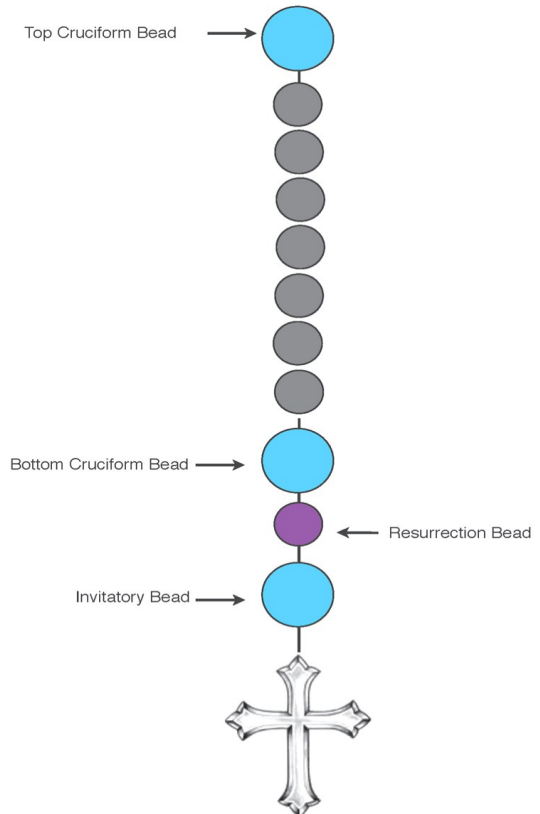
- Using each bead to name something you are thankful for.
- Using each bead to bless someone.
- Using each bead to offer up a prayer concern.
- Using each bead to share what you are feeling.
- Using each bead to tell God about your day.

**Using Beads to Listen to God** Prayer beads can also help us get quiet and listen to what God has to say to us. They can ground us when we are feeling scared or anxious. When we hold them, we are reminded that God is as close to us as the beads between our fingers. This might look like:

- Using each bead to take a deep breath.
- Using each bead to repeat a phrase, such as “Jesus loves me,” or “Please, God, help me.”
- Sitting with the beads while you listen to a song or a Bible story being read. What did you hear? What do you think God is saying to you through the song or story?
- Holding the beads when you are scared or sad, remembering that God is with you.

**It's important to remember...**

- There is no right or wrong way to use beads in prayer.
- Feel free to experiment with different ways to use your beads.
- You can use beads with prayers your family already uses or create or learn new ones.
- You can follow the beads to say your prayers, or you can hold them in your hands and feel God's deep love for you.



# EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
		8 AM	30
Last Week	\$6,840.00	10:30 AM	68
<i>Calendar Year 2026 (Jan. - Apr.)</i>	\$136,714.00	God First	-
<i>Calendar Year 2025 (Jan. - Apr.)</i>	\$132,469.00	Faith on Tap	30
Change from Last Year	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>2026 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:</b>	
Budget FY 2025-2026( <i>July-Apr.</i> )	\$365,930.00	Last Week	\$300, 100 Lbs
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date ( <i>July-Apr.</i> )	\$364,201.7.11	YTD	\$600, 2,400 Lbs
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	<b>-0.5%</b>	<b>Mother's Day Donations (Phoebe Home)</b>	
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>		\$922.00	

## Presentations to the Glory of God

### **Spread the Good News**

#### **In Honor of Ryan Correll's Birthday**

by Deana & Brooke Correll

**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.