



July 12th, 2026  
jesus receives  
Blessing of the Animals

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 Reader  
Vicki Mayk  
Greeters  
George & Valerie Borman, Gene & Christina Thrash  
Ushers  
Donna Christman, Julie Johnson, Karen Nuschke,  
Ralph & Connie Gioielli, Carol James  
Sound  
Pat Sorg and Doug Albert

Worship Theme: The Gospel of Luke – The Ministry of Jesus

This Summer we are embarking on a journey through the texts written by Luke: both his Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Worship will include some beloved and familiar songs and some new ones. The pastors hope our time together in God's word and this place of worship will give you the space you need to move through your days and weeks knowing that this community travels with you and that God holds, nudges, and carries you as well.

Let's settle in and sink into God's love and grace as Spirit gathers us here.

Prelude Music

The Lord's My Shepherd

Tune: Marosa, James Leith Macbeth Bain, Arr. Larry Shackley  
Blake Hoppes

Welcome & Announcements

We often share parts of worship responsively.

Phrases in Bold = All Read

Phrases NOT in bold = Leader

Call to Worship

Come as you are,  
with the burdens that are heavy,  
the memories that hurt,  
the actions that have darkened our spirits  
and know liberation:  
the easing of burdens,  
the healing of hurts,  
the lightening of our spirits  
in a love that forgives,  
renews  
and sets us free.  
Let us worship.

Prayer of Adoration And Confession

Jesus asks:

What then do we come to see?

Do we ask ourselves this when we come to worship?

Loving God,

we approach you this day in community  
to praise you for your goodness and mercy.

May we listen closely

when you have something to say to us,  
and may we interpret what is said  
according to your will rather than ours.

When we come weeping, you hear our pain.

Forgive us for ignoring and putting off  
what really needs to be done.

Forgive us for assuming  
and jumping to conclusions  
instead of really listening to the needs of others.

Forgive us for choosing  
to overlook simple necessities  
required by our neighbor  
and instead build up our own storehouses.  
Lord, you cancel our debts, and we are grateful.  
Not because you require gratitude,  
but because we realize our blessings.  
May we love you more, and through that love  
forgive others as we have been forgiven.  
Amen.

### **God's Open Arms and Our Union UCC Welcome**

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 Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken  
like the first morning,  
blackbird has spoken  
like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing!  
Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing  
fresh from the Word!

### **Sweet the rain's new fall**

sunlit from heaven,  
like the first dewfall  
on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness  
of the wet garden,  
sprung in completeness  
**where God's feet pass.**

Mine is the sunlight!  
Mine is the morning  
born of the one light  
Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation,  
praise every morning,  
**God's recreation**  
of the new day!

Please be seated.




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

### SONG Snowball Mountain Challenge (Theme Song)

This is a Snowball (Snowball) Mountain (Mountain) Challenge!  
This is a Snow! (Snow!) Ball! (Ball!)  
Moun! (Moun!) Tain! (Tain) Challenge!  
No matter what the future brings,  
With Jesus we can do all things  
Snowball (Snowball) Mountain (Mountain) Challenge!  
**Let's go, let's go, let's go!**

Activity Bags for children can be found at the doors.

### **No Children's Church August 30th**

 <p><b>Sunday Funday</b> CHILDREN'S CHURCH SERIES</p> <p>We invite all youth, ages 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade, to join us this summer as we explore the love and strength of our God. Kids begin worship with their families before being welcomed to Children's Church with Miss Nikki. Children will return before worship concludes.</p> <p>During our outdoor services this summer, we will hold Children's Church in the Grove.</p>	<p>May 24th - August 23rd</p>	<p>Returning in September: 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.</p>
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Scripture Reading  
Luke 7:24-50; 8:1-4

When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who put on fine clothing and live in luxury are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' I tell you, among those born of women no one is greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." (And all the people who heard this, including the tax collectors, acknowledged the justice of God, because they had been baptized with John's baptism. But by refusing to be baptized by him, the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves.) "To what then will I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not weep.' For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Nevertheless, wisdom is vindicated by all her children."

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and took his place at the table. And a woman in the city, who was a sinner, having learned that he was eating in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster jar of ointment. She stood behind him at his feet, weeping, and began to bathe his feet with her tears and to dry them with her hair. Then she continued kissing his feet and anointing them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw it, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what kind of woman this is who is touching him—that she is a sinner." Jesus spoke up and said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." "Teacher," he replied, "Speak." "A certain creditor had two debtors; one owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debts for both of them. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the greater debt." And Jesus said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman, he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has bathed my feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not stopped kissing my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore, I tell you, her sins, which were many, have been forgiven; hence she has shown great love. But the one to whom little is forgiven, loves little." Then he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." But those who were at the table with him began to say among themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Soon afterwards he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. The twelve were with him, as well as some women who had been cured of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, and Joanna, the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their resources

Song

ALL:

Open our hearts, open our minds.  
Open our lives to you,  
O loving God.  
(Repeat)

Open Our Hearts Jim Strathdee  
#28 Sing! Prayer and Praise

206

# A Woman Came Who Did Not Count the Cost

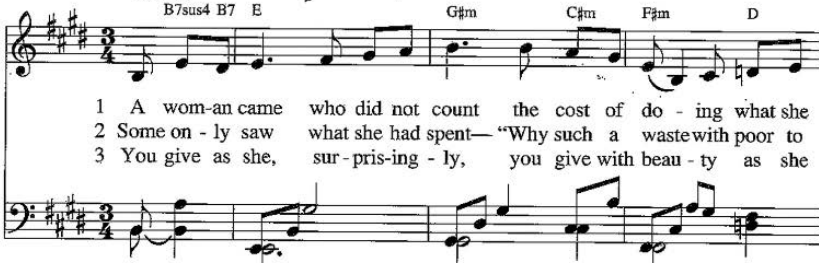
Mark 14:3-9

Unison

Tune: WEXFORD CAROL, L.M.D.  Irish folk melody

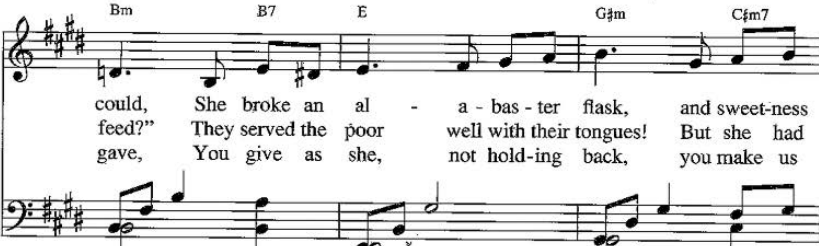
Richard D. Leach, 1990

B7sus4 B7 E G#m C#m F#m D



1 A wom-an came who did not count the cost of do - ing what she  
 2 Some on - ly saw what she had spent—“Why such a waste with poor to  
 3 You give as she, sur - pris - ing - ly, you give with beau - ty as she

Bm B7 E G#m C#m7




could, She broke an al - a - bas - ter flask, and sweet-ness  
 feed?” They served the poor well with their tongues! But she had  
 gave, You give as she, not hold - ing back, you make us

F#m7 B7sus4 E Refrain Bm




spilled on Je - sus’ head.  
 done a love - ly deed. O God, you are the A - noint - ing  
 Christ - like with your love.

Em G D B7



One who does not count your pas - sion’s cost, And when we

E G#m C#m7 F#m7 B7sus4 E



gath - er you will spill the sweet-ness of your grace on us.

## Reflective Prayer

Bending down hard  
with tears pouring down  
cleansing the feet of Jesus.

At that lowest place  
with hair long and loose  
wiping the feet of Jesus.

Uninvited

with broken heart  
kissing the feet of Jesus.

In humble adoration  
with the fragrant oil  
anointing the feet of Jesus.

My soul  
at his feet,  
sacrificed,  
cleansed,  
forgiven.

What does a kiss cost?

(Silence for your own reflections.)

## Prayers For Others And Ourselves

Christ, our redeemer,  
we long to hear  
'your faith has saved you'.

We come to worship in faith,  
with others across the world  
hanging on to hope  
and bringing our prayers  
and concerns to you.

We pray for your world,  
in this topsy-turvy climate  
we now experience more and more regularly,  
we pray for countries desperate for water,  
and for communities with too much water.

For crops growing  
and for the farmers who tend them,  
for fisher folk

and the families that worry about their time on the water,  
for the welfare of creatures and creation  
that we respect those who provide for our daily needs.

Lord, your church  
looks so different all across the world,  
different practices and expectations.



May the Spirit move and  
we not hinder that movement.  
May we never let ritual or convention  
get in the way of the way we worship,  
as we remember who you are.  
In this season of Ordinary time  
as we visit towns and villages  
let us be open to finding evidence  
of the extraordinary, of your presence  
where we are.

Lord, your children are hurting  
across the world and in our communities.  
We pray for fortitude and safety,  
for clean water and rebuilding,  
for food and shelter  
and for space to worship  
in this generation  
and for future generations.  
We pause for a moment,  
bringing those concerns and joys  
we know by name  
and even those unknown to us  
before you now.

*Silence*

May we go out proclaiming and teaching  
the good news of God as we have been taught,  
in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **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.

SUMMER SUNDAYS  
Favorite Hymns

During the greeting the Pastors will gather 2 favorite hymns from you to be sung at this time. We'll sing 2 verses of the selection. If your favorite hymn is not from the Gold or Black Hymnal, we will save it for another Sunday when you are here and we can put the words in the bulletin. Enjoy!

God of the Sparrow  
#32 Black Hymnal / New Century Hymnal  
Favorite Hymn: Jen Kareha  
All Verses

32 God of the Sparrow God of the Whale

1 Thess. 5: 18; Ps. 136

Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1983  
Tune: ROEDER, S.467.7.  
Carl F. Schalk, 1983

(Introduction) G7 C Em Am Dm

1 God of the spar-row God of the whale  
2 God of the earth-quake God of the storm  
3 God of the rain-bow God of the cross  
4 God of the hun-gry God of the sick  
5 God of the neigh-bor God of the foe  
6 God of the a-ges God near at hand

G7 C FM7 E7 Am Em

God of the swirl-ing stars How does the crea-ture say  
God of the trum-pet blast How does the crea-ture cry  
God of the emp-ty grave How does the crea-ture say  
God of the prod-i-gal How does the crea-ture say  
God of the prun-ing hook How does the crea-ture say  
God of the lov-ing heart How do your chil-dren say

FM7 Em7 Am Dm 1-5 Gsus4 G 6 c

Awe How does the crea-ture say Praise  
Woe How does the crea-ture cry Save  
Grace How does the crea-ture say Thanks  
Care How does the crea-ture say Life  
Love How does the crea-ture say Peace  
Joy How do your chil-dren say Home.

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

**Dreaming God's Dream Moment: Tami Herzog Wassum**



**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



**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*

Blessing of the Animals

What is a Blessing? In a few minutes, we will have a Blessing of the Animals. But first, let's think about 'blessing.' We don't bring our companion animals to a service like this so much because we think they need a special blessing from God – We bring them because we have been blessed by them and we want to say a thanks to them and to God. We know the blessing of a tail wagging when we return home, the blessing of whiskers twitching and ears turning to our voice. We know the blessing of bird song in the morning and hamster wheels spinning at night. Blessing words for the animals: We know the blessing of a nose nudging our hand for a treat, a mane brushing our face. We know the blessing of company, of trust, of playfulness, and of the responsibility to care and feed and love something that cannot speak words but speaks daily to our hearts. So we come to say thanks today. But we also come today because we know that we have blessing work to do. We come because we want to be a blessing. We want to bring safe harbor to creatures losing their homes to our overdevelopment of the land and resources. We want to protect the fragile ecosystems and gentle beaches that are home to rich bio-diversity. We want to ensure that no more creatures pass to extinction because we made it impossible for them to adapt. So we come today to be a blessing.

## Words of Thanksgiving

For all the animals in creation.

We give thanks!

For all of the fun and friendship we have with animals,

We give thanks!

For these animals we love,

We give thanks!

## A Time of Blessing of the Animals

Please bring your pet forward to one of the pastors for a blessing.

If you brought a picture or a stuffed animal or would like to come forward to represent your pet, we can provide a blessing for that as well.

Music Offering: All Creatures of Our God and King

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Blake Hoppes

Please stand in body or spirit.

## Song

Here are our hearts,  
Here are our hands,  
Here are our lives,  
Use them as you can.  
Show us those who hurt,  
Show us those in need,  
Show us how to serve,  
Teach us how to see.

Here Are Our Hearts Drake, Jennings  
#178 Sing! Prayer and Praise

## Prayer of Dedication

Generous God,  
many minister from their own resources,  
providing food for food banks,  
or trips to appointments,  
or hospitality and a listening ear.

But we realize  
all of our ability  
to minister originates in you,  
our gifts and our monies.

Thank you.



These tokens we bring are tithes and offerings  
for ministering—meeting the needs  
of communities near and far,  
making your kingdom ever-present  
and ever closer.  
Amen.

Sending

Go,  
and love God.  
Bless the people you encounter,  
help those you can,  
clean up the mess you leave behind,  
and seek God,  
today and everyday.  
Amen.

\*Hymn    Amazing Grace    Favorite Hymn: Steve Kareha

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 has brought me safe thus far,  
and grace will lead me home.

Postlude Music: You Are My King (Amazing Love)  
Billy James Foote  
Blake Hoppes

# EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
Last Week	\$9,061.00	8 AM	See You In September!
<i>Calendar Year 2026 (Jan.- May)</i>	\$167,501.00	10:30 AM	72
<i>Calendar Year 2025 (Jan-May)</i>	\$164,672.00	<b>2026 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:</b>	
Change from Last Year	<b>1.7%</b>	Last Week	\$300, 175 Lbs
<i>Budget FY 2025-2026(July-May)</i>	\$402,470.00	YTD	\$600, 2,575 Lbs
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-May)	\$393,863.00	<b>One Great Hour of Sharing</b>	
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	<b>-2.1%</b>	\$1,963.15	
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>		<b>MEDICAL DEBT FUNDRAISER</b>	
		\$9,473.50	

## Presentations to the Glory of God

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.