



**July 19th, 2026
sowers, seeds, soil
Baptism**

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 Reader

Dan Topp

Greeters

Carol Pope, Johanna & Greg Zellner

Ushers

Donna Christman, Deana Correll, Deb Wenner, Doug Brace, Marianne Kitzmiller, Brian Horwith, Maryann Puia

Sound

Dawn Dengler

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

Praise Him! Praise Him! Tune: Joyful Song, Chester G. Allen
Blake Hoppes

Welcome & Announcements

We often share parts of worship responsively.

Phrases in Bold = All Read

Phrases NOT in bold = Leader

Call to Worship

Leader: On this ground here,
this holy ground,
may we find our roots
and push up our branches.
May we encourage the life in each other
and create a forest of justice
and a field of love
and a meadow of truth
here on this ground,
this holy ground.
Let us worship.

Prayer of Adoration And Confession

Loving God,
whether a large crowd is gathered
or a small crowd comes to worship,
whether we are in an ancient place
where people have gathered for centuries,
or in an outdoor forest,
we are grateful
for the opportunity
to worship in community.
We give thanks
for days that surprise us,
especially days when we receive
your word with joy.
We thank you for the invitation
to be your mothers and brothers
by hearing the word of God
and doing it.

We realize there are plenty of times
we have heard the word of God
shaped it to suit us.
We have made choices
that harm the growth of others.
We have also chosen to ignore your word,
choosing envy and competition
rather than exercising the fruits of the Spirit
and we are sorry.
Forgive us, we pray.
May we live by the Spirit
and by your Word,
reflecting your Wisdom
in our daily lives.
May our ears be attuned to the word,
and may we perceive and understand
all you would have us hear this day.
In Jesus' name we pray.
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** Come to Tend God's Garden
#586 Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal

**Come to tend God's garden, seeds of hope to sow,
Planting fields of justice, watching mercy grow!
In an arid wasteland, spread a verdant health!
In a land of tumult, cultivate God's peace!**

**As we tend God's garden, from its furrows rise
Stems of fresh beginnings, stretching toward the skies!
Graciousness, our meadow, joyfulness, our root,
Unity, our foliage, righteousness, our fruit!**

**May God's garden flourish, may our toil succeed,
May God bless our actions, every word and deed!
Serving Christ each season, with God's diagram,
Charted by the Spirit, for the task at hand!**

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

 Sunday Funday CHILDREN'S CHURCH SERIES We invite all youth, ages 3 through 5th 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. During our outdoor services this summer, we will hold Children's Church in the Grove.	May 24th - August 23rd	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.
---	-----------------------------------	---

Sacrament of Baptism

Cooper Yarosh, son of Amber (Smith) and Igor Yarosh
Sponsors: Trevor Ring and Rayma Fairly

Tamia Rice
Sponsor: Matt Rice

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE:
All: We promise our love, support, and care.

All Sung:
I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
With a faith to suit you well;
I'll be there in case you wander off and find where demons dwell.
I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

10:30 Music Offering Passacalle Sylvius L. Weiss
Mike Baer, Guitar

Scripture Reading

Luke 8: 4-21

When a large crowd was gathering, as people were coming to him from town after town, he said in a parable: "A sower went out to sow his seed, and as he sowed some fell on a path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on rock, and as it grew up it withered for lack of moisture. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. Some fell into good soil, and when it grew it produced a hundredfold." As he said this, he called out, "If you have ears to hear, then hear!" Then his disciples asked him what this parable meant. He said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but to others I speak in parables, so that 'looking they may not perceive

and hearing they may not understand.'

"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. The ones on the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. The ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe only for a while and in a time of testing fall away. As for what fell among the thorns, these are the ones who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. But as for that in the good soil, these are the ones who, when they hear the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart and bear fruit with endurance.

"No one after lighting a lamp hides it under a jar or puts it under a bed; rather, one puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not be disclosed, nor is anything secret that will not become known and come to light. So pay attention to how you listen, for to those who have, more will be given, and from those who do not have, even what they seem to have will be taken away."

Then his mother and his brothers came to him, but they could not reach him because of the crowd. And he was told, "Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you." But he said to them, "My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it."

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

The Message: sowers, seeds, soil
Pastor Kris

Reflective Prayer

“There’s no such thing as perfect soil,”
the quote of a gardener.
“Still other seed fell on good soil.
It came up and yielded a crop,
a hundred times more than was sown,”
the parable of the sower.
“Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear,”
the words of Jesus.
We sit,
we listen,
to agree or not to agree,
to be good or not to be good,
to be perfect or not to be perfect.
Different plants need different soils:
good soil defined by its function for specific plants.
Different people need different approaches
to grow in faith:
good soil defined by its function
for each individual’s needs
Jesus defined soil as good, not as perfect:
each soil has some hay, grass
and weeds growing among it,
each soil can be affected by pests and weather,
but each good soil can produce a bountiful harvest.
Yet we are trying to be perfect,
we want to be perfect for God.
Yet we tend to say “I’m not good enough”
when to Jesus we are good enough!
Imperfection.
We sit,
we listen,
to be or not to be,
to accept or not to accept,
to share or not to share.
Showing our imperfections,
acknowledging our vulnerability,
confessing our mistakes:
that’s who we are,
finding courage,
practising compassion,
creating connection
so that we can be the good soil to help others.

(Silence for your own reflections.)

Prayers For Others And Ourselves

Merciful God, we thank you that your parables
speak into our hearts,
that when the words do fall on good soil
our hearts are nourished.

Help us to pay attention to how we listen
and focus our energies on seeking out your Word.

We offer thanksgiving and prayers of blessing
for the persons sitting beside us,
before us and behind us,

that may they know
your deep abiding love for them.

We offer thanksgiving for
all those who have gone before us,
grateful for the interactions,
the love and shared faith.

Mourning follows its own path,
and we pray for the bereaved.

May they know your loving comfort
and that you accompany them,
all travelling that particularly winding path.

Lord, we pray for the people
who are kept from knowing you
because of the crowds.

Too many people being distracted from
hearing your voice, too many conflicting
demands on time, too many priorities
preventing access to your word.

Weave in perceptions of possibility
shaping the approach to time and energy
so that it reflects your light and love.

One of the activities of the world is war,
and sadly there are many conflicts
not only countries at war,

but in our communities,
people not getting along with each other.

Remind us how to live in relationship;
how to be brothers and sisters in Christ.

Open our hearts and minds
to peaceful solutions
and commitment to maintaining connections.
May your church be at the centre of renewal
and may your word not return to you empty.

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!

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



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

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

ALL: Abundant God,
we come today with our offerings
grateful for your provision
and for growth.
May our contributions of money
and the gifts
which you have so liberally given
sow good seeds
throughout the communities we serve
locally and across the world.
We thank you that with your word
these offerings
can produce a hundredfold.
May it be so.
Amen.

Sending

Friends, we have heard the story of the sower
scattering seed far and wide.
Some fell on the path,
some among rocks,
some among thorns,
and some fell on good soil.
The seed is the word of God,
freely given, generously scattered,
falling into every kind of life and heart.
So as you leave this place today:



Scatter kindness where the world is hard.
Plant hope where life feels rocky.
Bring patience where worries and troubles grow thick.
And pray that in your own heart,
and in the hearts of those you meet,
God's word may take root, grow strong,
and bear fruit in love, mercy, and grace.

***Hymn In the Garden**

I come to the garden alone,
while the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.
And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

He speaks, and the sound of His voice
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;
And the melody that He gave to me
Within my heart is ringing.
And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

I'd stay in the garden with Him
Tho' the night around me be falling;
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe
His voice to me is calling.
And He walks with me, and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

Postlude Music: Isn't He John Wimber, Arr. Mark Hayes
Blake Hoppes

Worship Theme: spill the beans worship and learning resources for all ages
issue 59, www.spillthebeans.org.uk © 2026 Spill the Beans Resource Team

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
Last Week		8 AM	See You In September!
		10:30 AM	102
Calendar Year 2026 (Jan.- May)	\$167,501.00	2026 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Calendar Year 2025 (Jan-May)	\$164,672.00		
Change from Last Year	1.7%		
Budget FY 2025-2026(July-May)	\$402,470.00	Last Week	\$300, 175 Lbs
		YTD	\$600, 2,575 Lbs
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-May)	\$393,863.00	One Great Hour of Sharing	
		\$1,963.15	
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-2.1%	MEDICAL DEBT FUNDRAISER	
Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes		\$10,134.35	

Presentations to the Glory of God

Children's Bulletin

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