

October 25th, 2026
You Are My Friends

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
8:00am - Michael Roth 10:30am- Vicki Mayk
Greeters
Jim and Leanna Lane, Sharon Maletsky
Ushers
8:00am- Cliff James, Carol James, Michael Haftl, Daniel Haftl
10:30am- Eric Minnich, Gene Thrash, Jason Klinger, Marlene & Dale Blose, Kim Pentland, Andy Dyszel
Sound
Karl Klinger

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."
- Jesus (The Gospel according to John)

The scene is set. Jesus gathers at the table with his disciples to break bread and break the news that this is their Last Supper together. Alarming fear, bitter betrayal, and tension-laden uncertainty fill the room. In the midst of this unsettling moment, the Gospel of John records Jesus' "famous last words." Central among these was the commandment to love one another. How do we survive, or even thrive, in times like these? We put love into action, replacing "othering" with "neighboring."

Prelude Music
Come, Christians Join to Sing
Words: Christian H. Bateman, 1843 Tune: Madrid, Spanish folk melody; arr. Benjamin Carr, 1824 *Public Domain*
Blake Hoppes

WE PREPARE THE TABLE

Welcome & Announcements

We often share parts of worship responsively.
Phrases in Bold = All Read
Phrases NOT in bold = Leader

The Invitation
Threshold Moment

Leader: To be a friend is to be an equal, Jesus says. He has already demonstrated this at his Last Supper with his disciples by washing their feet. Love happens when we see one another as an expression of Divine Holy Love. Our intentions are clear. There is no hidden agenda, only the common desire to lead with love, not fear. Jesus is about to lay down his life for his friends, literally. Yet he knows that these friends will deny and abandon him in moments of distress. He also knows that love is what they will need to pull them through it. He knows they are capable of it, they will endure. And so will we when love leads the way and we claim each other as friends.

ALL Sung:
Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.
Let there be peace on earth
The peace that was meant to be.
With God our creator,
we are family.
Let us walk with each other
In perfect harmony.

Your responses are in bold…

Jesus looked at his disciples and saw what they needed in their fear.
They needed each other.
They needed their connections to restore their assurance.
We all need to know that we are not alone.
Friends care. Friends abide. Friends love.
We are called to love each other as friends.
As neighbors,
As neighbors.
Not "others."
Not "others."

Leader: Let us pray:

Forgive us when we let our fear sideline us, taking us out of the action that is love.
Help us to defy the urge to belittle in order to feel safer or better.
Even though it feels like a difficult thing to do,
help us to restore–not tear down,
help us to serve–not judge,
help us to reach out–not pull back,
help us to risk reciprocal relationship
so that all are less alone and less afraid.

In this moment we ponder those we find difficult to imagine as friends, that we consider "others"…

… and in this moment we imagine them as neighbors who, like us, have needs and fears and the desire for safety, sustenance, and love.

Jesus, in your name we pray for ears
to hear your command once again–
to love as you loved and to be a friend to all. Amen.

ALL Sung:
Let peace begin with me,
let this be the moment now.
With every step I take,
let this be my solemn vow.
To take each moment,
and live each moment,
In peace eternally.
Let there be peace on earth,
and let it begin with me.

"Let There Be Peace on Earth" by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson; Copyright © 1955, Renewed 1983 by Jan-Lee Music, (ASCAP All Rights Reserved. International copyright secured.)

SHARING PEACE

Leader: Early Christians were often afraid. In the midst of their fear they met together to eat and pray and remember that Jesus always wanted more peace for them–for all. And so we continue their practice of passing the peace:

The peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

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

***Hymn** #506 What A Friend We Have In Jesus
New Century / Black Hymnal
Text: Joseph Scriven, 1855; alt. Tune: Charles C. Converse, 1868; *Public Domain*

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
Everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy-laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge—
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer;
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there.

Please be seated.

WE LAY THE FEAST

10:30 Children's Time – Invite Children Forward

ALL SING:
This is My commandment that you love one another,
that your joy may be full.
This is My commandment that you love one another,
that your joy may be full:
That your joy may be full,
that your joy may be full.
This is My commandment that you love one another,
that your joy may be full.

Children's Church • Ages 3 to Grade 5 • Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Children begin worship with their families and are invited forward for Children's Time with Ms. Nikki. They then leave with Ms. Nikki and return to worship with their families before the service ends.

Education Hour • Ages 3 to Grade 7 • Sundays 9:15–10:15 a.m.

Children are invited to join Ms. Nikki and our Education Hour leaders in Fellowship Hall.

Our Nursery is Open! Parents are welcome to stay with their little ones in our nursery during church. Listen To and watch worship together while you snack, play, and rest.

8am Music Offering: Lord, Speak to Me

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Heritage Choir

10:30am Music Offering: Saved

Words and Music by Larry Ritter © Larry Ritter. Used by Permission.

Larry Ritter

Scripture Reading

John 15: 12-17

Reader: "This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. And you are my friends, if you do what I command you. I no longer speak of you as subordinates, because a subordinate doesn't know a superior's business. Instead I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learned from Abba God. It was not you who chose me; it was I who chose you to go forth and bear fruit. Your fruit must endure, so that whatever you ask of Abba God in my name God will give you. This command I give you: that you love one another."

The Message: You Are My Friends Pastor Kris

WE OFFER OUR GRATITUDE
Prayers of the People

ALL SUNG:
Love, love, love one another
Love one another for God is love.
Love, love, love one another
Love one another for God is love.

Leader: When we want to make a point, when we want people to remember something in particular, we repeat it. And so did Jesus. Today we heard again his repeated "dying wish," so to speak, or his commandment: love one another. What also bears repeating is is that we always need help in fulfilling this commandment. And so let us prepare our hearts for prayer by repeating again that love comes from God.

Love, love, love one another
Love one another for God is love.
Love, love, love one another
Love one another for God is love.

"Love One Another" | Words and music by Tommy Walker.
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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.

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

Ambassadors (everyone!): Share our news, events, and spirit on social media and with your friends, family, and neighbors. That's what keeps us relevant, and growing!

UNION
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Relevant • Engaged • Growing

THERE OUR HEARTS WILL BE

OUR OFFERINGS to GOD

Thank you for all that you do and all that you are to help create a church that is relevant, engaged, and growing!

Electronic Giving

Vanco Mobile

Venmo

Ways to give financially:
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 Pastor Kris if you have questions or if you'd like to learn more about other giving options like legacy or estate gifts to Union UCC.

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also..." – Matthew 6:21

Music Offering: We Will Glorify
Twila Paris © 1982 New Spring (Administered by Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Inc.) CCLI License #1523377
Blake Hoppes

Please stand in body or spirit.

All Sung:
Praise God, the Source who makes us one,
Praise Jesus Christ, beloved Son.
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Our gifts we give as we've been led,
all bodies, minds, and spirits fed.
Help us show love,
Here as above,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

(Tune LASST UNS ERFREUEN)

Dedication Prayer

Leader: Matthew 6: 21 says, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

All: Generous God, we know that faithful stewardship is not primarily about money—it is about placing our hearts in your hands, trusting that where our hearts go, our lives, choices, and resources will follow. Together, as a community shaped by grace, we will ask: Where is our treasure? How can our hearts more fully align with yours? Let our giving reflect our deepest values and commitments. Align our actions with our commitment to love and serve wholeheartedly. Transform, heal, and renew our hearts. May our generosity be rooted, joyful, and Spirit-led we pray, Amen.

The Mandate: Love in Action

Leader: As we prepare to go from this place with our closing hymn, we remember the mandate, the commandment, that Jesus repeated to his disciples so they would always be restored by the love of friends. Let us say this together:

"This command I give you:
that you love one another."

The Blessing

Leader:
Receive this blessing:

God, who created you ready for relationship,
be with you as you seek to love in the midst of difficulty.

Jesus, who showed you the way,
be with you as you seek to love like him.

The Spirit, who will never leave you lonely,
give you capacity for love that surprises even you.

In the name of the Three-in-One,
go out to be Love-in-Action
this week and for all time. Amen.

***Hymn *Hymn Love, Love, Love, Love**
American Folk Hymn, *Public Domain*

Love, love, love, love,
Christians, this is your call:
Love your neighbor as yourself,
for God loves us all.

Postlude Music: For the Beauty of the Earth
Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1864 *Public Domain*
Blake Hoppes

Altar Design Team: Kathy Bonsell, Claire Kern, Deb Topp, Pastor Kris

Worship Theme: "*Adapted from www.worshipdesignstudio.com/ neighbor in collaboration with https://campaignforkindness.com/.*

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	$8,948.00
Calendar Year 2026 (Jan.-Sept.)	$ 289,863.00
Calendar Year 2025(Jan.-Sept.)	$ 274,871.00
Change from Last Year	**5.5%**
Budget FY 2026 (July-Sept.)	$ 89,702.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date *(July-Sept.)*	$ 88,570.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	**-1.3%**
Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes	

Attendance Last Week	
8 AM	43
10:30 AM	93
Confirmation Class	10
Faith on Tap	32
Breathe	12

2026 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week	$25, 450 Lbs
YTD	$625, 3,520 Lbs

FMSC
$1, 863.00

Presentations to the Glory of God

Spread the Good News

In Memory of Dad Gordon Rothrock and Family
by daughters Lucille Kuhns, Lana Reitz and Leoma Kern

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.*