



God is Holding Your Life

Sunday, January 10, 2021

Online Worship

“These Lives Are Precious”

A Journey of Assurance for the New Year



www.worshipdesignstudio.com/life

GUESTS, Welcome to worship. To learn more about us, please visit our website at www.unionucc.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/unionneffs . If you would like us to follow up with you contact Pastor Kris at 610-767-6961, pastorkris@unionucc.org

NEW MEMBERS: For more information email Pastor Kris. pastorkris@unionucc.org or call the church office to speak to her.

We believe in extravagant welcome. We believe in God's inclusive love. We start worship with a greeting that reflects that welcome and love.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey and
faith's journey
You are welcome here.

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PRELUDE

He Is Born! Traditional French Carol, 19th c.

WELCOME

We begin a new worship series today that we pray will bring a “breather” and a sense of assurance to us all. Life is a series of exclamations from “O No!” to “Help!” to “Oh Yeah!” We can swing between disappointment, helplessness, and gratitude on a daily basis. The Book of Psalms knows all about this. Written over a span of time from exile and isolation to the rebuilding of the community, the poetry of the Psalms will accompany us in this series, reminding us that through it all, we can trust that God is, indeed, holding our lives.

This worship will allow us to simplify and slow down for a time. We will lean on prayer, reflection and sharing with one another.

Threshold

“God is Holding Your Life”

L We do not live in a land ruled by Kings, as the hearers of our first Psalm of this series did. Nevertheless, the petitions of the psalmist for justice, deliverance, defense of the poor and oppressed, and peace for all peoples is an undergirding theme of our faith. We are reminded that a just society is one that proclaims “these lives are precious” and worthy of protection. God, indeed, is holding our lives. Let this *be* our “epiphany” in this new year.

SUNG:

Lift up your eyes, behold the hills.

From where will help and rescue come?

We call the One who made the earth,

Who bless'd the stars, the moon and sun.

**God is holding your life
God is holding your life
God is holding your life, we believe**

**God is holding your life
God is holding your life
God is holding your life, we believe**

Opening Prayer

Leader: Holy and Just God,
You have shown us what is right and good.
Open us this day to a vision of the world made all-right
so that we might follow your ways and know the peace of
your reign on earth as it is in heaven.

**People: We praise you for your steadfast presence,
holding our lives together in love.
Amen.**

HYMN 206 We Three Kings

Hymns for the Family of God (Gold Hymnal)

**1. We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar.
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.**

CHORUS

**O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect Light.**

**2. Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign.**

CHORUS

**3. Frankincense to offer have I.
Incense owns a Deity nigh.
Prayer and praising all men raising,
Worship Him, God on high.**

CHORUS

**4. Myrrh is mine: Its bitter perfume
Breaths a life of gathering gloom.
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.**

CHORUS

Psalm Reading

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Lukan Psalter translation

*O God, give your anointed one your judgment—
and your justice.*

*Teach your chosen one to govern your people rightly
and bring justice to the oppressed.*

*The mountains will bring the people peace
and the little hills bring justice!*

*Your anointed will defend the oppressed
among the people,
save the children of the poor,
and crush the oppressor.*

*The reign of your anointed will endure
as long as the sun and moon—
throughout all generations.*

*The rule of the chosen one will be
like rain coming down on the meadow,
like showers watering the earth.
Justice will flower through the days,
and abundance of peace 'til the moon
shall be no more.*

*Tarshish and the Isles will offer gifts;
Arabia and Sheba will bring tribute.
All rulers will pay homage,
and all the nations will serve your anointed.*

*Your anointed will rescue the poor
when they cry out,
and the oppressed when there is no
one to help them.*

*Your chosen one will take pity on the lowly
and the poor,
and will save their lives.*

*Your chosen one
will rescue them all from violence
and oppression,
and will treat their blood as precious.*

Reflections and Testimonies of Being Held

Pastor Kris and Friends
Todd, Amy ,Tori, and Connor McCoy
Deb and Fred Sanek
Carrie Beleno

Sung Reprise

God is Holding Your Life

God is holding your life

God is holding your life

God is holding your life, we believe

[repeat]

“Selah” Moment

The Psalms have a repeated direction throughout—the word “Selah.” Scholars are not sure exactly what it means. Perhaps because the Psalms were to be used in worship, we can surmise that the word indicates a pause, or an invitation for a musical instrument to be played. In this worship series,

we will use an instrumental sound to remind us to take a pause, a breath, and remember that the settling of our hearts can offer the feeling that we are held in the hands of the Divine. We will hear a bell and then have some silence. Feel free to close your eyes if you like. Imagine yourself held in safety and love and care. When you hear a bell again, consider opening your eyes and resuming to prayer with us.

Silence

Prayers of the People

Let us continue our prayers. I will offer a category of concern and we will allow a brief pause, then we will respond as indicated. As a prayer posture for this worship series, I invite you to cup your hands, ready to receive God's love and peace, and in preparation to be God's love and peace in the world.

Let us pray for the leaders of this world and this church community...

God of Justice, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who live in conflict around the world...

Prince of Peace, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for all who are experiencing loss of any kind in this pandemic...

Comforting Healer, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who are homeless, hungry and alone...

Emmanuel, God-With-Us, hear our prayer.

Let us pray for those who live in comfort,
for Christ-like hospitality and generosity...

Transforming Spirit, hear our prayer.

Holy and Living One,

for those we have named and the ones whose names we do not know,
hear our prayer.

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.**

Sung Prayer Response

Put Peace Into Each Other's Hands

[sung]

**Put peace into each other's hands
and like a treasure hold it,
protect it like a candle flame,
with tenderness enfold it.**

**Put peace into each other's hands
with loving expectation;
be gentle in your words and ways,
in touch with God's creation.**

The Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Will you make a gesture of extending your cupped hands toward others who may be with or near you as a sign of offering the peace that Christ gives us. If you are alone,

place your cupped hands over your heart, as a sign that you send your heartfelt peace out to the world.

**Give thanks for strong yet tender hands
held out in trust and blessing.
Where words fall short let hands speak out;
the heights of love expressing.**

Offerings and Announcements

Music Offering

Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC

OFFERING ENVELOPES you can mail your envelopes to the church. The church address is on one side, just add a stamp.

ELECTRONIC GIVING This is a great time to try **e-giving!** Choose a weekly, semi-monthly or monthly donation to be transferred electronically. Fill out the form at <http://www.unionucc.org/egive.pdf> and return it to the church office. financialmanager@unionucc.org

DONATE ONLINE with your Credit or Debit Card

Go to <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/> and click **GIVE ONLINE**.

AMAZON SMILE Donate to Union UCC, Neffs (Search by zip code 18065) while you shop at Amazon. <https://smile.amazon.com>.

Benediction

Now go in the knowledge that
God is holding your life
even as we hold each other.
You are not alone.
You are loved.
Amen.

HYMN #128 In The Bleak Midwinter
The New Century Hymnal (Black Hymnal)

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air,
But only His mother
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a wise man
I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give Him,
Give my heart.

Postlude

What Child is This (Greensleeves) Traditional

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EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$12,101
Calendar 2020 (Jan-Nov.)	\$327,195
Calendar 2019 (Jan-Nov)	\$343,061
Change from Last Year	-4.6%
Budget (July-Nov)	\$159,210
Actual (July-Nov)	\$144,178
Giving vs. Budget	-9.4%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

2020 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last	lbs, \$25
Total YTD:	7,737 lbs, \$3,545

Christmas Mission
\$2,369

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS SPONSORS:

Your support is especially important now as we work to provide spiritual care and connection for members and the community through Facebook posts, ads, and online worship.

Be a sponsor for \$20, send to Union UCC through your offering envelope or online marked Spread the Good News.

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