



**Sunday, May 2, 2021**  
**“From You Comes My Praise: Guide My Steps”**  
**Fifth Sunday of Easter**  
**Confirmation Day**  
**Acolyte Recognition**

**GUESTS,** Welcome to worship. 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). If you would like us to follow up with you contact Pastor Kris at 610-767-6961, [pastorkris@unionucc.org](mailto:pastorkris@unionucc.org)

**NEW MEMBERS:** For more information email Pastor Kris. [pastorkris@unionucc.org](mailto: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.*

Ushers: Phil Wehr, Ron Pope, Deidre Bilger, Todd McCoy, Ed & Liz Norman, Jamie & Aften Hamm, Connie Gioielli  
Sound: Mike Baer, Drew Panner

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Thank you for wearing a mask and practicing 6 feet of social distancing.

As you arrive, please visit the welcome tables to:

1. Sign In – we will verify your name and phone number.
2. Get a bulletin of the service or you can view it on your phone by scanning the QR Code.
3. Share your offerings.

## PRELUDE

The Heart of Worship

Matt Redman

## WELCOME

**L** No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey and faith's journey

**C** You are welcome here.

## ACOLYTES Completing their Service

**ALL:** We, the congregation of Union United Church of Christ recognize you for your faithful service as worship acolyte. For your assistance in worship leadership we are grateful

As you continue your faith journey, may you grow in your faith and in your capacity to serve Christ and his Church with devotion and joy. Amen

**Acolytes:** Alexis Baron, Carter Christman, Parker Haydt, Eve Horvath, Brayden Peters, Ella Stanek

**Program Coordinators:** Susan Glosan & Julie Wehr

## GATHERING OUR STRENGTH

### Threshold

*Leader:* We are a resurrection people! Those who seek new life – new beginnings. And we, the church, must be a place of knowing and growing and accepting love. We hear today the question asked by the Ethiopian eunuch: “Here is water. What is to keep me from being baptized?” As we dance into diversity and acceptance, may the Spirit guide our steps for nothing is keeping us from it!

**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,  
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.  
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,  
Dare to dance again!**

*Leader:* Dancing requires that we pay attention to the steps, that we watch for the steps of those who have danced this dance of life before – those whose seeking and questioning and dreaming can lead us to seek and hope and dream. Imagine now a dreamer in whose steps you would like to follow. How did they choreograph their dance of life? Now, imagine yourself following their steps with courage and joy!

**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,  
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.  
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,  
Dare to dance again!**

*Leader:* This is the call!  
Look to the skies be it rain or shine.

**People: We lift up our heads to meet the day.**

Look around and see that you do not dance alone.

**People: We fortify our hearts with compassion and action.**

If rain still lingers, open the umbrellas of praise and set out anyway.

**People: For we are called to dance again!**

**HYMN #351 I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry**  
(Black Hymnal)

1. I was there to hear your boring 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.
2. When you found the wonder of the Word,  
I was there to cheer you on;  
You were raised to praise the living God,  
to whom you now belong.  
Should you find someone to share your time,  
and you join your hearts as one,  
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme  
from dusk til rising sun.
  3. In the middle ages of your life, not too old,  
no longer young, I'll be there to guide you  
through the night, complete what I've begun.  
When the evening gently closes in,  
and you shut your weary eyes,  
I'll be there as I have always been  
with just one more surprise
  4. 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.

### **Prayer**

Leader: Holy One, Justice-Seeker, Lover of Creation –  
Open us to learn new steps of faithfulness.

Give us courage and patience.

Come and dance with us, engage with us, as we seek you –  
so that we can be risen with Christ and in Christ.

Be with us now, we pray. Amen.

### **Affirming the Peace Among Us**

Leader: The peace of the risen Christ is with you!

**People: And also with you!**

Leader: You are invited to turn to the people around you  
and wave as a sign of graceful greetings this day.

## **LEARNING THE STEPS**

**A Story for All Ages live in the grove with Mrs. Puia**

\*See picture in Announcement

## **A STORY FOR THE AGES**

### **First Reading: Psalm 22:25-31** *(NRSV, adapted)*

From you comes my praise in the great congregation; my vows I will pay before those who fear God. The poor shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Holy One shall praise the Lord. May your hearts live forever! All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord. For dominion belongs to the One who rules over the nations. To this One, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; and I shall live for God alone.

Posterity will serve God; future generations will be told about the Lord, and proclaim God's divine deliverance to a people yet unborn, saying that God indeed has done it.

### **Second Reading: Acts 8:26-39** *(NRSV, adapted)*

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went.

Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The eunuch replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him.

Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth."

The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he

proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"

He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing.

## **MESSAGE**

**A Covid Confirmation**

**Pastor Kayli Freeman**

### **CONFIRMANDS ARE CALLED FORWARD TO AFFIRM THEIR FAITH**

#### **STATEMENT OF FAITH by The Confirmation Class of 2021**

*Please join the students as they read their statement of faith together*

I believe that God is always watching over us in our lives.  
**(Garet Hill)**

I think God has created this earth and every thing and one in it. I believe God is everywhere from rainy days to blooming flowers.  
**(Luke Thrash)**

God is like the protector of people that believe in him.  
**(Zane Roth)**

I think [Jesus] is the son of God who died for us, he was our model and example on how we should live our lives. He loves everyone and protects us and is always with us  
**(Bryce Thrash)**

I believe that Jesus is our Lord and Savior and that he died to save us. I also believe that he loves us no matter what.  
**(Hannah Minnich)**

I believe the Holy Spirit is the method of how God can communicate with us spiritually. By knowing what the Holy spirit

is I know I can trust god. **(Ellyana Belletieri-Bieber)**

Church is a place where everyone is welcome. It is a place where you can connect with God **(Delaney Chilcote)**

Church is a place to gather to hear the word of God. To hear about other's trials in life. To care for those in our community. To have sympathy and love for others. **(Brody Wolfe)**

Church is somewhere that you can be yourself and nobody will judge you. I also believe that church can be a safe place. **(Ryleigh Minnich)**

I think prayers are a way of communicating with God. Whether you speak it out loud or in your head God will always hear you. **(Isabelle Fekula)**

I believe that being a Christian means trusting in God and believing that he has a plan for me even when I can't see it. **(Regan Haley)**

My journey will never be over but I want to be the best person I can be. **(Emma Milander)**

## **THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

### **Invitation**

### **Questions**

### **Prayer of the Candidates**

O God, my God, known to me in Jesus Christ, I give myself to you as your own, to love and serve you faithfully, all the days of my life. Amen.

### **Prayer of the Congregation (UNISON)**

**Almighty God, who in baptism received these your servants into the church, forgave their sins, and promised them eternal life, increase in them the gifts of you Holy Spirit.**

**Grant them love for others, joy in serving you, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition,**

**self-control in all things.**

**Thereby strengthen them for their ministry in the world;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

### **Act of Confirmation**

Confirmands will be blessed and prayed over by a pastor, parents, and God Guides, and the entire congregation. Each confirmand receives a welcome bag of gifts and a certificate from the teaching team.

### **Prayer of Confirmation**

### **Questions about Participation**

### **Welcome (unison)**

**We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers  
as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus  
Christ**

**By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow  
together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses  
of our risen Savior. Amen.**

### **Greeting of Christian Love**

Consistory Officer

### **Prayer**

## **BENEDICTION**

### **THE BODY MOVES IN RESPONSE**

### **Prayers of the People**

*"Teach Me to Dance" [refrain only]*

**Teach me to dance to the beat of your heart,  
teach me to move in the power of your Spirit,  
teach me to [move] in the light of your presence,  
teach me to dance to the beat of your heart.**

*Leader:* For the beauty of the world in all its diversity, we give you thanks, O God.



*Leader: Let us pray together...*

*People: **May our gratitude to you fill our days.***

*Leader: We need your healing, O Holy One,  
for our troubled planet, for our nation,  
for all who are struggling in body, mind,  
relationships, and spirit.  
We remember those who are suffering...*

*Leader: Let us pray together...*

*People: **Come, O God, and restore our lives.***

**Teach me to pray in the power of Easter,  
following Christ in a life resurrected,  
teach me to act with compassion and justice,  
teach me to dance with the beat of your heart.**

*Leader: Be with each of us now.  
May the dance of your Spirit ever call us  
to engage with you and with the needs around us.  
Lead us; guide us; surround and fill us.*

*Leader: Let us pray together...*

*People: **Come, Holy Spirit, come.***

**Teach me to love with your heart of compassion,  
teach me to trust in the word of your promise,  
teach me to hope in the day of your coming,  
teach me to dance to the beat of your heart.**

## **Offering Our Resources and our Energy**

*Leader: How has the testimony of the people in our  
lives and through the generations guided our steps into  
dances of praise at the good news that we are loved  
and blessed?*

*What transformation is possible as we abide with God  
and “find our groove” of praise with the congregation?  
Let us pool our resources and order our steps to bring  
life and wholeness to the larger community through our  
offerings this day.*

## 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](mailto: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>.

## Invitation to Holy Communion

Ⓛ Will you open yourselves to the grace of Jesus Christ that is always and already available here at this table? If so, say, "Open us to your grace, Lord."

**All: "Open us to your grace, Lord."**

Ⓛ Will you open yourselves once again to the call of Jesus Christ?

If so, say, "Open us to your call, Lord."

**All: "Open us to your call, Lord."**

Ⓛ Will you open yourselves to the possibility of transformation through Jesus Christ?

If so, say, "Transform us, O Lord."

**ALL: "Transform us, O Lord."**

Ⓛ As we prepare to attend the heavenly feast, we especially pray for those who have no earthly tables, or no place at a table, and so little daily bread

We confess this day that we have been slow to join the dance

that brings life to all, brings love to all, brings sustenance to all.

In silence, let us lift up our prayers of confession...

**L** Hear this good news!

God has loved you from the very beginning.  
The invitation of Christ is never-ending  
because resurrection can happen at any moment.  
The Holy Spirit is transforming you even now!  
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

**All: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!  
Glory to God! Amen!**

**Sung (ALL):**

**Teach me to pray in the power of Easter,  
following Christ in a life resurrected,  
teach me to act with compassion and justice,  
teach me to dance with the beat of your heart.**

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

**L** Jesus is with us!

**ALL: With us now and forever!**

**L** So lift up your hearts and voices!

**ALL: We lift them up to God!**

**L** Let's join in thanks and praise!

**ALL: How right it is to do this together!**

**L** Holy Living One,

You transformed a whole lot of nothing into this amazing  
creation.

You breathed life all around and called it good.

You invited us to the wonder of it all

and when we could not face you, you turned us around.

You keep bringing us around and around, time and again,  
offering the chance to join the freedom-dance.

And so we join with the glorious chorus of saints past and  
present,  
singing a never-ending hymn of praise:

**ALL: (Spoken)**

**Holy, Holy, Holy!**  
**God of power and might,**  
**everywhere we see your glory!**  
**Blessed are they who come in your name.**  
**Hosanna in the Highest!**  
**Alleluia! May it be so!**

**L** Indeed, you are holy!  
And blessed is your son Jesus,  
Anointed One, Liberator,  
Dance Partner, Sibling, Friend.

Jesus sat at tables with those who had no place  
and offered fulfilling food for bodies and souls.  
And on the night when he would give all love for us,  
he sat at the table with extended family—  
just as he hosts this table here and now with this extended  
family.

He offered the usual prayers of thanks to you, God,  
over bread and cup, and then disrupted the gathering with  
uncustomary words:

“Take and eat this bread—it is my body given for you.  
Whenever you gather around the table together, remember  
me.”

“Take and drink from this cup, each and every one—it is the  
sign of a new covenant,  
(for business-as-usual is over and done and the resurrection  
dance goes on).  
This love is poured out for all people.  
Whenever you gather around the table together, remember  
me.”

And so, my friends, we remember. And we believe:

**ALL: Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come  
again!**

**L** Pour out your Spirit upon us now!  
Pour out your transforming presence  
on the gifts of this body  
and the gifts of this bread and fruit of the vine.  
May they be for us your life and love,  
uniting us as one body—Christ’s body—  
for the sake of loving the world. Amen.

### **Prayer of Jesus (Unison)**

**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.**

### **Communion**

Leader: The gifts of God for the people of God. Take  
and eat, take and drink.

### **Music Offering**

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus                      Helen H. Lemmel

Leader: The table extends beyond this physical space  
and into the space of the Spirit that unites us.  
May this meal ready us to  
love, trust, hope, and dance  
to the beat of God’s heart.

## **STEPPING OUT**

**HYMN Here I Am Lord** Text: Daniel Schutte Music:  
Daniel Schutte; arr. Michael Pope, SJ, Daniel L. Chutte  
and John Weissrock © 1981 Daniel L. Schutte and New

## Dawn Music

**I the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry. All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save. I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright. Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?**

### **CHORUS**

**Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.**

**I the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them. They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?**

### **CHORUS**

**I the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame. I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Finest bread I will provide till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?**

### **CHORUS**

## **Benediction**

*Leader:* Poet and songwriter Leonard Cohen penned these words that we can surely lift to God:

“Dance me to your beauty with a burning violin  
Dance me through the panic till I'm gathered safely in  
Lift me like an olive branch and be my homeward dove  
Dance me to the end of love

Oh, let me see your beauty when the witnesses are  
gone

Let me feel you moving like they do in Babylon  
Show me slowly what I only know the limits of  
Dance me to the end of love.”

May we follow the lead of the Spirit  
as we find expansive ways to dance the dance of love.

And may the Loving God,  
Risen Christ,  
and Dancing Spirit  
fill you with all you need  
for the days ahead.

And all God’s people said,  
“**Amen!**”

**Postlude**

Sing Your Blues Away  
Stan Whitmire

Wallace B. Varner Arr.

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[www.worshipdesignstudio.com](http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com)

# EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	
Calendar 2021 (Jan-March)	\$319,780
Calendar 2020 (Jan-March)	\$302,781
Change from Last Year	-2.6%
Budget (July-March)	\$319,780
Actual (July-March)	\$302,781
Giving vs. Budget	-5.3%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

2021 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	
Total YTD:	2,326 lbs, \$167

Easter Mission
\$2,135.00

## SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS SPONSORS:

**Yay Confirmands and Families, GodGuides, & Teaching Team! We love you. Pastor Kris**

*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.*