

Good Enough:

Embracing the Imperfections
of Life and Faith

Lent 4

"We often believe we are the problem."



March 27, 2022

8am and 10:30am

401G Moment, 10:30 Baptism

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: To share your questions and interest in learning more about our church family, contact pastorkris@unionucc.org or call the church office to speak to her.

One of our core values as a church is extravagant welcome and hospitality. We believe in God's inclusive love. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Lay Reader: 8:00 Carol Pope, 10:30 Doug Kuntz

Ushers: 8:00: Cliff James, Carol James

10:30am: Carrington Smith, Jim Lane, Jason Klinger, Susan Smith, Al Stubbmann, Karen Misera, Claire Kern, Gene Thrash

Sound: Doug Albert

Wearing a mask inside the building will now be optional.

For those who are not vaccinated against COVID-19, we recommend wearing a mask (as per CDC guidelines).

Singing - Close proximity while singing contributes to transmission of particulates. If you like to sing, please consider wearing a mask during those portions of worship. Our choirs will continue to mask when singing.

***Please stand in body or spirit**

Music for Gathering

Sweet By and By Joseph P. Webster

Welcome and Announcements

Threshold

Leader: Each week of this Lent season, we are focusing on ways that we can practice a counter-cultural theology that emphasizes the beauty and grace of the reality of life-right-now rather than waiting with increasing judgment to reach some vision of a perfected existence. Our ladder-climbing efforts sometimes end up taking us down a rung or two as things don't work out just right. And so let us continue to turn ladders into gardens, nurturing our souls and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives.

"Good Enough"

Soloist/Choir: What in our lives do we dream about for tomorrow, void of sorrow?

Time spent regretting decisions of our yesterdays,
mistakes we made?

Sometimes we get what we get,
life disappoints us and yet,

God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

ALL: REPEAT

Calling on God

Based on Psalm 32

Leader: Let us pray together:
Holy One, God of Forgiveness,

**we call out to you and
and you surround us with deliverance.
You love us infinitely more than we love
ourselves or others.**

**Open us this day to your counsel,
helping us be more merciful, more grace-filled,
so that we might rejoice in simple and good enough
moments that fill our days.
Amen.**

Honest Questions, Compassionate Response

Leader: Today we will hear how the Prodigal Son lives high on the hog and then famine strikes in the land of his dream vacation. And so he heads home, tail between his legs, expecting that he has lost it all. To his surprise, his extravagant failure is met with extravagant love and grace. We can be pretty hard on ourselves when things don't go as planned. Guilt, shame, and fear of being seen as a failure can leave us wallowing in the pig pen. Our delusions of a perfectible life keep us disappointed in ourselves. Truth is, life is a big ole risk every single day and facing whatever each day holds is not only good enough, but worthy of love and grace. Do you find yourself being unrealistically hard on yourself? Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

Silent Reflection

Leader: Hear this compassionate word from the Second Letter to the Corinthians: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the guilt and shame of our past failings and our present unrealistic expectations.

We are invited to rejoice that each day is a new beginning, so that we might enjoy, and not dread, the life before us.

And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.

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

The Peace

Leader: How do we mean the words that we say: “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,

ALL: You are welcome here.

Leader: Let’s do all that we can to practice this greeting in word and action.

Please rise and stand in body or spirit for the first song to greet each other with a smile or wave.

***Opening Hymn/Song**

**Hymn #627 Jesus Is All the World To Me
Gold Hymnal (Hymns for the Family of God)**

ALL:

1. Jesus is all the world to me,
My life, my joy, my all;
He is my strength from day to day,
Without Him I would fall.
When I am sad, to Him I go,
No other one can cheer me so;
When I am sad, He makes me glad,
He’s my Friend.

2. Jesus is all the world to me,
My Friend in trials sore;
I go to Him for blessings, and
He gives them o’er and o’er.
He sends the sunshine and the rain,
He sends the harvest’s golden grain;
Sunshine and rain, harvest of grain,
He’s my Friend.

3. Jesus is all the world to me,
And true to Him I’ll be;
Oh, how could I this Friend deny,
When He’s so true to me?
Following Him I know I’m right,

He watches o'er me day and night;
Following Him by day and night,
He's my Friend.

The Word in Music

10:30 Children's Choir My Best Friend Joel Houston,
Marty Sampson

Micayla Hoffert, Brooklyn Hoppes, Lincoln Hoppes, Connor Maxwell, Lucas Maxwell, Raegan Minnich

Cayden Hoppes, piano, Gavin Hoppes, drums, Jordan Hoppes, bass

Children's Time

Pastors invite children forward.

Children's Message with Edie Fella & Ron Pope

Song: This, This is Where Children Belong
Congregation/All:

The musical score is written for a voice part in 6/8 time, featuring a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The lyrics are: "This, this is where child-ren be - long, Wel- comed as part of the wor - ship - ping throng. Wat - er, God's Word, bread and cup, pray'r and song, This is where child - ren be - long." The score is divided into four lines of music, each with a measure number (1, 3, 5, 7) and corresponding chords: F, C/E, Dm, Bb; F/A, Gm, Am/C, C; F, Gm, Am, Bb; F/C, Bb, F.

Parents and Families – your children will return to you in the sanctuary by the end of worship.

If Children's Church is longer than worship, please meet them in Room 7 in the Basement (the Preschool Rooms).

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Chanley Rae Flamm, child of Kelsey (Imdorf) and Spencer Flamm

Sponsors: Kristyn Imdorf and Michael DiGennaro

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

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

Celtic Alleluia O'Carroll and Walker #613 With One Voice

CELTIC ALLELUIA

Celtic Mass
Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major and 6/8 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 6/8 time signature. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' are written below the notes. The second staff continues the melody with similar note values and lyrics. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Music © 1985, 1996, Fintan O'Carroll and Christopher Walker. Published by OCP. All rights reserved.

The Word in Music

8:00 Heritage Choir My Lord is Like a Shepherd Lani Smith,
Arr. Hugh S. Livingston, Jr.

Gospel Reading

Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." So he told them this parable:

“There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.

“When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’”

“So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

“But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’

"Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

A Word of God that is still speaking,
ALL: Thanks be to God.

Thoughts about an Imperfect Life and Faith:
We often believe we are the problem. Pastor Kris

Prayers of the People

SOLOIST/CHOIR: Though all along our daily pilgrim race
our treasures small and very few may be,
our souls are blest with God's unending grace,
and that is enough, enough for me.
Oh, that's enough for me,
God's truth has set me free;
the love of Christ has sanctified my soul,
and that is enough for me.

Leader: Blaming is a typical human behavior. We've talked about those times when we blame ourselves harshly, and we know we often turn the blame on others. A particular attitude of blaming happens in a culture that has identified "goodness" with "boot-strapping effort." So many who are victims of systematized oppression are blamed for their own circumstances. They end up being deprived of just resolutions to the deprivation that results from unjust systems. As individuals, as a society, and as a church, we must work to eradicate this kind of blaming and its resulting layers of suffering.

SOLOIST/CHOIR: When food and raiment are not ever
sure, and simple fare is hard to get for some,
we work to share our goods with one and all,
and that is enough, enough for me.
Oh, that's enough for me,
God's truth has set me free;

a love like Christ's is meant for ev'ry soul,
and that is enough for me.

The Prayer of Jesus

**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, For ever. Amen.**

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 form at <http://www.unionucc.org/egive.pdf> and send to 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>.

This year the **Easter Mission Offerings** will be divided between the **Miller-Keystone Blood Center** and **Meals on Wheels of the Lehigh Valley**. Please support these two mission organizations by using the Easter Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or blank

envelope marked - Easter Mission.

Give online at <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/> for eEaster Mission.

401G Moment – Dennis Foster, Funds of Lasting Gifts and Planned Giving

Offering – we will not be collecting your offerings during the service. Please plan to share them at the welcome table as you arrive or as you leave worship.

OFFERING PRAYER: Generous God,
in light of your extravagant blessings—
no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives—
we offer our gifts and ourselves,
and know that you transform what we plant
into the produce of love.

Amen.

MUSIC OFFERING

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
Anthony J. Showalter

Elisha A. Hoffman,

A Blessing for Becoming Real

*"Blessed are you who do not despise your realness.
It may hurt. You may not recognize yourself in the mirror.
But this is what we hoped for, right?
To live and love. To be loved.*

*To have our experiences show on our faces and in our cells.
It is the real life of Jesus in us, being made visible, as all our
seams show."*

Benediction

And now, may the God who loves all of creation,
especially the broken bits, and Jesus, our companion along
this crooked path called life,
and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising
ways,

go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

Choral Reprise

God is still here and somehow, this faith is good enough.

***Closing Hymn/Song**

Hymn #402 Sing of Colors

Black Hymnal (New Century Hymnal)

ALL:

**Sing of colors, sing of colors that over the hills
in the profusion are springing;**

**Sing of colors, of the birds that fly outside
my window their canticles singing;**

**Sing of colors, in the rainbow's bright colors
God's promise of hope we recall;**

**Sing of colors that make up the earth
and give thanks to the God who created us all.**

**Sing of colors that make up the earth
and give thanks to the God who created us all.**

**Sing, rejoicing! Every creature that breathes
raise a song to the God of creation.**

**Sing, rejoicing! Sing to God who so
earnestly cares, who has offered salvation.**

**Sing the good news! Sing the love the Savior
reflecting the colors of all.**

Many colors that shine from God's face,

many colors that tell us God's love to recall.

Many colors that shine from God's face,

many colors that tell us God's love to recall.

Postlude

The Heart of Worship

Matt Redman

Worship Notes:

Altar and Sanctuary Decorations: Claire Kern, Deb Topp,
Tina Jarrett, Kathy Bonsell, Pastor Kris, Pastor Kayli

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“A Blessing for Becoming Real [excerpt]” from [*Good Enough: 40'ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*](#) by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Used with permission. Purchase the book at www.katebowler.com/goodenough.

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$6,550.00
Calendar 2022 (Jan)	\$29,063.00
Calendar 2021 (Jan.)	\$30,541.00
Change from Last Year	-4.8%
Budget (July-Jan.)	\$255,250.00
Actual (July-Jan.)	\$253,847.00
Giving vs. Budget	-0.5%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week	
8:00 am	
10:30 am (includes children)	120
Children's Church	23

2021 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	lbs, \$
Total YTD:	1708 lbs, \$185

Easter Mission to Date:	\$293.00
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Presentations to the Glory of God

Spread the Good News :

***In memory of Ruth Rothrock from Lucille Kuhns,
Lana Reitz, Leoma Kern and family***

*Be a sponsor for \$20, send to Union UCC through your offering
envelope or online marked Spread the Good News or \$8 for
Children's Bulletin.*

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

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