

# *Good Enough:*

Embracing the Imperfections  
of Life and Faith

## *Ash Wednesday*

"Perfectionism is impossible.  
Transformation isn't."



**Ash Wednesday**  
**March 2, 2022**  
**12noon and 7pm**

**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:** To share your questions and interest in learning more about our church family, contact [pastorkris@unionucc.org](mailto: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 on life's journey, you are welcome here.***

Lay Reader: 7pm Maggie Gygan

**Thank you for wearing a mask and practicing social distancing.**

**As you arrive, please visit the welcome tables to:**

**1. Pick up a paper bulletin of the service or you can view it on your phone at :**



**2. Share your offerings. 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. Check out Ways to Give online. Thank you for your generous hearts.**

**Call in to listen to the service at 610-410-9595.**

**Email Marissa at [administrator@unionucc.org](mailto:administrator@unionucc.org) if you would like a bulletin mailed to you.**

**TODAY we are celebrating communion.**

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.

Please pick up your supplies at the welcome table when you arrive.

If you are joining us from home, we invite you to get a piece of bread or a cracker and some juice/wine or water.

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**Please stand in body or spirit**

**7pm Music for Gathering (Prelude)**

Jesus Paid It All

Elvina M. Hall, John T. Grape

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Threshold**

*Leader:* Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lent season, a time when we aspire to make some room for deeper introspection and practices that will draw us into the love and assurance of faith. But sometimes faith can feel not as assured as we hoped for. We can feel “less than,” perceiving that others seem to be able to be “more faithful” in their practices and beliefs. This Lent, rather than change for “the best,” we’ll seek to gain momentum one day at a time, “to reach for a faith that is never perfect, but good enough.”

## *“Good Enough”*

SOLO/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.

## **Calling on God**

*Leader:* Let us pray together:

**Holy One, Merciful God,  
make yourself known to us.**

**Be present with us in this often troubled journey of life.**

**Create in us hearts that are open to transformation.**

**Give us the patience of practice in this Lent season—  
ordering our days with time enough for you.**

**Amen.**

## **Honest Questions, Compassionate Response**

*Leader:* Jesus used the word “hypocrite” to describe those who put on airs in public to make people believe that they were holy, that their religious practice was... well... perfect. But their hearts were actually not in the practice, rather in the rewards that public approval could bring them—which is here today, often gone tomorrow. Sometimes it is life itself that robs us of the shiny, perfect life that we had planned for ourselves. A diagnosis. A broken heart. A lost opportunity. What places in your life and faith could you begin to loose from the chains of perfectionism? Let us take a moment of silent reflection...

## *Silent Reflection*

*Leader:* Hear this compassionate word from the prophet Isaiah: “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke?... Then your light shall

break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly.”

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the bonds of perfectionism, inviting us to break the yoke of what “should be” so that we might discover what “might be” when we honor the small steps that are *actually* possible, in this moment, for this one day.

And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.  
**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.  
Glory to God! Amen.**

### **The Peace**

Leader: One of our core values is sharing God’s extravagant grace. We welcome and encourage each other on this journey of faith by saying that no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,

**ALL: You are welcome here.**

Leader: As we rise and stand in body or spirit for the first song, I invite you to pass a “wave” of peace to the people around you (and the people worshiping at home)!

### **\*Opening Hymn #451 Be Now My Vision (Black Hymnal, New Century Hymnal)**

**1. Be now my vision, O God of my heart;  
nothing surpasses the love you impart  
You my best thought, by day or by night,  
Waking or sleeping, your presence my light.**

**2. Be now my wisdom, and be my true word;  
Ever within me, my soul is assured;  
Mother and Father, you are both to me,  
Now and for ever your child I will be.**

**3. Riches I need not, nor life’s empty praise,**

**You, my inheritance, now and always;  
You and you only are first in my heart,  
Great God, my treasure, may we never part.**

**Gospel Reading**  
*Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21*

*Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.*

*So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

*And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

*And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*

*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

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

**Thoughts about an Imperfect Life and Faith**  
“Perfectionism is impossible. Transformation isn’t.”

## **Ritual of Ashes and Turning Ladders into Gardens**

SOLO/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:* As we move into our ritual of receiving ashes we want to point you to the plants on the ladder. This image will remind us each week to spend time tending the things that are beautiful and growing already in our midst rather than constantly climbing and reaching for more—for those things we think we are “supposed” to achieve or have in our lives.

We are reminded in the Ritual of Ashes that we are part of the dust and debris of this earth. Just as things of creation grow but also die in the cycle of life, so too our lives have times of growth and times of decay and death. Placing the sign of the cross on our foreheads with ashes is a reminder of this difficult reality but also a reminder of the presence of God, the grace of Christ, and the power of the Spirit in all of it. Early Christians were anointed with the sign of the cross on their foreheads at their baptism. This “sign and seal,” as it is called, is a way to remember that we are marked and held as God’s own, through *all* of the transformations and transitions we face.

You are invited to come forward to the railing for ashes. Keep your mask on and stay spread out. Pastors will place ashes on your forehead or hand and will clean their hands between each person. May you know God’s blessing in the ashes and in the new growth of life and faith.

### **Music for Ashes 7pm Adult Choir**

We Gather at Your Table, Lord Traditional Irish Melody, Arr.  
Walter Ehret

**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](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>.

**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. Thank you for being the church with us!

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

Leader: Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace.

*Leader:* Christ looks upon each one with love and says,

**ALL: “you are welcome at my table.”**

Christ looks upon each one with compassion and says,

**ALL: “whatever troubles you, bring it here.”**

Christ looks upon each one with grace and says,

**ALLL: “whatever you'd like to leave behind, do it here.”**

Will you come?

Will you bring your troubles?

Will you shed all that is unnecessary in your life?

This is the place where you need not be perfect,  
you need not be sure of yourself or your faith,  
you need not feel whole and right with the world.

Jesus invited many to his tables  
and in doing so, he assured them of their place

in the illogical reign of love and grace.  
He just wanted them to be hungry for relationship—  
hungry to look across a table into another's eyes,  
to break open their lives,  
and lift a cup in the midst of the hard times and hear,  
“this is for all,  
and so this is for you, beloved.”

Leader: The Holy Living God be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts!

**ALL: We lift them up to the Lord!**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**ALL: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,  
anytime and everywhere to give thanks to you.  
You created this world full of so much beauty and  
Sorrow and called it Good. And called it Enough.

Although we feel lost at times,  
you are ever present.  
We doubt, resist, turn away, and rage,  
insistent on our own power to pull us through,  
and yet sure that we are to blame,  
making life seem like a confusing paradox.

But you are patient.  
You are here to meet us—reside with us in strange and  
alienating times,  
always faithful, always present  
in this Body at the table...  
in this Body among your people.

And so, we pray:

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine.  
Make them be for us sustenance for our days,  
love for simple and ordinary lives,



fuel for justice in this world.

By your Spirit open us to each other.  
Open us to the world,  
making us one in you,  
through Christ,  
in the power of your amazing grace!

### **SHARING THE MEAL**

L: The gifts of God for the people of God. Take and eat.  
Take and drink.

L: May the precious body and blood of our Lord Jesus  
Christ keep and preserve you unto eternal life.

### **7pm MUSIC OFFERING**

I Surrender All                      Judson Van DeVenter &  
Winfield Weeden  
Blake Hoppes

### **A Blessing Before a Fast**

L: Each worship experience will end with a blessing from  
the book. Here is “A Blessing Before a Fast.”

*Blessed are you, ready to open yourself to a new joy,  
a doorway that until now has been hidden. In this cul-  
ture of acquisition and gain, blessed are you desiring  
fresh ears to hear what might be a bit too loud. Who  
take the next step to turn it down a notch and make  
more space for God. Who discipline yourself, with  
time, intention, and hope, anticipating God to show up  
in your discomfort. Trusting that when we need God,  
God promises to be there.*

*God, give me courage, give me strength, give me  
hunger for you. Let this set time of less be a chance  
for more of you. Let this fast be an entrance into the  
discernment I desire, the divine presence I'm longing  
for, and the hope to will what You will, oh God, to be  
who You've called me to be.”*

## **Benediction**

Leader: And now, may the God who loves all of creation,  
especially the imperfect 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.

### **CLOSING HYMN** Amazing Grace

**ALL:**

**1. Amazing grace, How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but now I am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.**

**2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved.  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed.**

**3. Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come,  
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far  
And grace will lead me home.**

### **Choral Reprise**

SOLO/CHOIR: God is still here and somehow, this faith is  
good enough.

**7pm Postlude**  
**Have Thine Own Way, Lord**      **George C. Stebbins**

Worship Notes:

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

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# **EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY**

<b>Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)</b>	
Last Week	\$7,878.00
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>	

<b>Attendance Last Week</b>	
8:00 am	<b>42</b>
10:30 am (includes children)	<b>135</b>
Children's Church	

<b>2021 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:</b>	
Last Week:	lbs, \$100.00
Total YTD:	1340 lbs, \$185

Blanket Fund to Date:	\$2,308.00
Souper Bowl to Date:	\$897.00

## **Presentations to the Glory of God**

### **Spread the Good News :**

***In honor of Mission Committee by Phil and Julie Wehr***

*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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