



CASH

WEDNESDAY



WORSHIP
DESIGN STUDIO

LOOKIN' FOR...

L₁ O₁ V₄ E₁

IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES

worshipdesignstudio.com/love

Ash Wednesday
February 22, 2023
7pm

GUESTS, Welcome to our faith community here at Union UCC. To learn more about us please visit our website at www.unionucc.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/unionneffs.

Please complete the Welcome Card in the racks in front of you and hand it in with your offering or give it to a pastor. This is a good way to let us know you're here.

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 and outreach within our community and the world.

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 Readers: Carol Pope, Tami Wassum
Sound: Doug Albert

“Yet even now,” says the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting...rend your hearts and not your clothing.” — Joel 2: 12-13

The Christian scriptures offer many images of where love, grace, forgiveness, righteousness, and healing can REALLY be found. And it is not in the “usual” places. Isn’t it as true of us today as it was of the scriptural authors? Don’t we often look for wholeness and happiness in places that offer only temporary “good feelings” and satisfaction? Lent is a wonderfully reflective time to reassess where we are searching for meaning and purpose. We will move through stories of Jesus to find out who offers the “real deal.”

We will be sharing Holy Communion today.

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace. If you are at home, we invite you to find something to eat and drink that represents the elements for you. Here, you will be served in your seats. Wait to eat and drink until the Pastor invites you to do so.

A non-gluten option with juice is available in a prepackaged container on the bread tray. Both red wine and white grape juice are on the tray of cups. Please choose either.

***Please stand in body or spirit.**

Jesus Paid It All **Prelude**
Elvina M. Hall, John T. Grape
Blake Hoppes

Welcome

Leader: Welcome to our Ash Wednesday service. Have you ever played Scrabble? If you have, you likely drew a hand of letters at some point that didn't easily spell out anything right away. You had to search for opportunities to connect with a missing piece to make sense of what you had in your hand.

Lent has traditionally been a time of searching for what's missing. This year, we will admit that we have often been "lookin' for love in all the wrong places," as the song goes, and we will hear what the scriptures have to say about where love can truly be found. We come with our "hearts open, minds awake..."

Threshold Moment

Solo:

Hearts open, minds awake,
change us now for heaven's sake.
Leave us not alone in hatred's wake.
Show us how to love.
Show us how to love.
Show us how, show us how to love.

Leader: Ash Wednesday is a "marker" of the beginning of the Lent journey of self-reflection and discernment, originating in the 11th century church. The journey of repentance is about "turning around" (the origin of the word) so that we might be in right relationship with God. In a sense, we are looking for love once again. When we look to God for love — not simply for the approval of others — and start with our own "turning," we participate in the "turning around" of the world.

Solo:

Eyes open, shocked awake,
much to learn from our mistakes.

Draw us closer in our heartache.
Show us how to love.
Show us how to love.
Show us how, show us how to love.

Confession and Assurance

Leader: Let us join together in opening our hearts to the love of God. Before we even utter a word, we can be assured God will offer us grace and a way forward. For this reason, we can be honest with what most pains us most about our own thoughts and actions. Let us pray:

Holy and Merciful One,
in this season of discernment we come bringing our
deepest longings,
and our failed attempts at satisfying them.
We have often looked for love in things that cannot give us
love.

***People: We yearn for lives that matter,
we desire relationships that thrive,
we want less regret.***

Leader: At times we fail to see that you have already given
us what really matters:
your love and acceptance.
You provide opportunities all around us
to make a difference in the lives of others.
You give us a fresh start each day,
inviting us to do better.

In this silence, we bring to you our pleas for openness
to a different way of living.

Silence

My friends, be assured by the Psalmist who says,
“God has mercy according to God’s steadfast love.”

Let us respond together:

**All: We open our hearts, our minds, our souls, our vision
to the ways of love created by God,
embodied in Jesus,
and already moving in us by the Spirit.
We are forgiven, loved, and freed!
Amen!**

Peace

Leader: The love and peace of Christ be with you!

People: **And also with you!**

Leader: I invite you to pass this love and peace to one another by crossing your arms across your chest, indicating love, and then opening them with the common two-finger sign for peace, [remembering to send some of that love and peace to those worshiping remotely].

Please stand in body or spirit.

***Hymn** #107 Amazing Grace

Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

- 1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now 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. The Lord has promised good to me, His word my hope secures; He will my shield and portion be As long as life endures.**

Please be seated.

WE PROCLAIM
First Reading Carol Pope

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, it is near — a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness spread upon the mountains, a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come.

Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD, your God?

Blow the trumpet in Zion; sanctify a fast; call a solemn assembly; gather the people. Sanctify the congregation; assemble the aged; gather the children, even infants at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.

Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep. Let them say, "Spare your people, O LORD, and do not make your heritage a mockery, a byword among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, 'Where is their God?'"

Second Reading Tami Wassum

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."

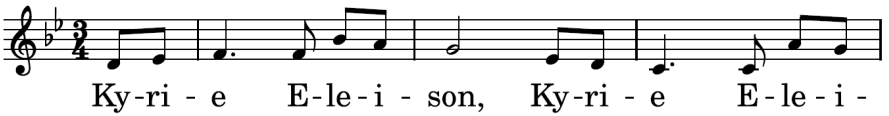
The Message

WE RESPOND

Prayers and Ashes

Sung response: Kyrie Eleison (Guarani)

Leader: : In this season of Lent, we will come together in prayer using an ancient form in the church. The Greek words, "Kyrie Eleison" mean "God, have mercy on us." The church has been chanting this during prayer since the early centuries of its existence. Listen first, and then join us to learn it:



Solo first time, Everyone second time.

Leader: As we prepare to receive ashes, let us take a moment to contemplate the true "treasures" we have. What would be devastating to live without? Who are the people that grace our lives, miracles of presence? What are the purposes in our path that we would regret never doing? I invite you to write whatever comes to your mind and heart in this moment.

Now, take a moment to list the things in your life that distract you, that steal time and energy from your attention to these treasures, to this love.

All (sung):
Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison
Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison

Leader: Holy and Forgiving God,
we beseech you, cry out to you,

to intervene in us this season.
Help us create more attention to the places true love is found

—

in the treasures that are so abundant around us, given by
you.

We prepare our lives to be marked with the reminder
that we were made from dust, and to dust we shall return.

In this cross of ash upon our foreheads,
may we commit to the heart-opening journey ahead of us
as we consider that which gives life and all that contributes to
death.

We know you are with us.

This is...

the dust of dreams deferred
the ashes of burned bridges

the dust of worn out, dead end paths
the ashes of destroyed relationships

the dust of years of accumulated unfinished business
the ashes of neglected passions

we are marked by both love and sorrow
dreams and disappointment
fear of death yet undying hope

we are wholly yours
we are yours, holy one

Amen.

ALL (sung):

Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison

Kyrie Eleison, Kyrie Eleison

News about the Ministry and Mission of God's Church Offering

OFFERING PRAYER

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OFFERING ENVELOPES. If you can't attend worship, you can mail your envelopes to the church. The church address is on one side, just add a stamp.

ELECTRONIC GIVING. Choose to give a repetitive contribution on a regular basis (i.e weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly), or make single contributions whenever you desire in an amount of your choice. Electronic contributions are initiated from Union UCC's website (UnionUCC.org). Click on 'giving', then on 'Ways to Give' and follow the prompts. Feel free to contact John Harting (610-799-2508) or Don Penrod (610-398-2654) to answer your questions or demonstrate the process.

VENMO Union UCC now has Venmo! You can now make donations, pay for events, and support the church through this platform. Please be sure to include in the "What it's for" line what your Venmo is supporting. You can either search for @unionuccneffs

MOBILE GIVING. If you would like to give on the go, Vanco, the company that processes our e-giving transactions, has a mobile app that allows you to do so. Open your app search screen, search under "Vanco Mobile Faith \Engagement" and follow the prompts.

Easter Mission Offering

This year the **Easter Mission Offerings** will be divided between the **Habitat for Humanity and the Jubilee Breakfast Ministry.**

Please support these two mission organizations by using the Easter Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or make a note on your check or blank envelope for Easter Mission. Give online at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/campaign/C-12H6T>

The mission of Habitat for Humanity of the Lehigh Valley is to provide hardworking families with simple, decent, affordable housing. Since 1989, Habitat has built 131 homes for families in the Lehigh Valley.

The Jubilee Breakfast Ministry at Zion's Reformed Church in Allentown serves about 65 breakfasts to those who need a meal each Thursday, Friday, and Saturday during the coldest months of the year, November through April.

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Musical Offering

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross Isaac Watts
Blake Hoppes

Please stand in body or spirit.

***Offering Response**

ALL: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God, above, the heavenly host.
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost!

Please be seated.

Imposition of Ashes

We invite you to come forward to the railing to receive ashes and communion. The ushers will direct you when to come forward. The pastors will let you know when to leave the railing. Please place your empty cup in the trays as you return to your seat.

If you want to be served in your seats, let the ushers know and the pastors will come to you.

Everyone is welcome to this meal of love and grace. If you are at home, we invite you to find something to eat

and drink that represents the elements for you.

Here, you will be served in your seats.

Wait to eat and drink until the Pastor invites you to do so.

A non-gluten option with juice is available in a prepackaged container on the bread tray. Both red wine and white grape juice are on the tray of cups. Please choose either.

Communion

**Music Offering – Choir
My Saviour and My God
Jay Althouse**

WE GO FORTH

Nurturing Love

Please stand in body or spirit.

***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.**

***Hymn #677 They'll Know We are Christians By Our Love
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God**

**1. We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, We are
one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, And we pray that
all unity may one day be restored:**

**And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

**2. We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
We will walk with each other, we will walk hand in hand,
And together we'll spread the news that God is in our land:**

**And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

**3. We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
We will work with each other, we will work side by side,
And we'll guard each man's dignity and save each man's pride:**

**And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love,
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.**

Benediction

Leader: Go forth into the world, looking for love in all the right places!

People: **We will look for signs of Love,
making the true treasures of our lives the center of our hearts!**

Postlude

**I Surrender All Judson Van DeVenter & Winfield Weeden
Blake Hoppes**

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

Liturgy adapted from worshipdesign.com

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$9,166.00
Calendar Year 2023 (Jan)	\$37,004.00
Calendar Year 2022 (Jan)	\$29,651.00
Change from Last Year	+24.8%
Budget FY 2022 (<i>July 2022-Jan. 23</i>)	\$261,970.00
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (<i>July 2022-Jan 23</i>)	\$248,782.00
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-5.0%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

Attendance Last Week		
	In person	Online
8:00 am	46	
10:30 am	119	
Education Hour	4	
2022 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:		
Last Week:	bs, \$50	
Total YTD:	924lbs, \$150	
Souper Bowl	\$547.00	
Blanket Sunday	\$754.00	

Presentations to the Glory of God

In the memory of Walt Disney

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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