



How precious are your thoughts about me, O God.
They cannot be numbered!
I can't even count them; they outnumber the grains of sand!
Psalm 139: 17-18

June 18, 2023

**Financial Leadership Team: Our Money Story Sunday – Reimagine
Celebrating the Men in Our Community/Father's Day
10:30 Worship**

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, fellowship, 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: Janice Metzger

10:30 Donna Christman, Brian Horwith, Deb Wenner, Maryann Puia, Gloria Toner, Carol Stout, Marianne Kitzmiller

Sound: Doug Albert

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

Prelude

Reverie Claude Debussy

Blake Hoppes

Welcome

Preparing for Worship

One: Can you imagine unfettered love?

Free and bold, wild and true, the kind of love that changes you?

Can you imagine a home—safe and bright,

With impromptu dancing, meals around table, and laughter late into the night?

Can you imagine faith like a compass

That guides the way you shop and vote, the way you love and hope;

That asks questions and yet still believes, even despite uncertainty?

Can you imagine a world where trees, bees, and all living things grow wild and free?

Where peace is the narrative and hope the currency?

A world where news stories are testimonies and funerals are far between?

Can you imagine?

All: Yes, we can imagine.

One: Today in worship, dare to dream. Dare to imagine what could be.

And pay attention, for God is here, in wandering thoughts, hopes, and prayers.

All: Let us worship holy God, that great unfettered love.

Prayer of Illumination

Leader:

Holy God,
We want to see what you see.
We want to see what you see,
But we stumble through roadblocks
of bias and narrow perspective,
Fear and limited information.
We are too small to imagine the type of
love and beauty you can sow.

roadblocks that keep us from you.
Blow the dust out of our ears.
Thaw out the frozen parts of our hearts.
Tell the logical arguments we form about what will
and will not work to take a backseat.
And as you do, Breathe fresh air into our lungs and
fill our minds with endless possibilities.
We want to see what you see.
We want to reimagine this life we're living.
Clear away the roadblocks. Amen.

Response Song #391 In the Midst of New Dimensions
Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal

**ALL: In the midst of new dimension,
In the face of changing ways,
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples
Wandering in their separate ways?
God of rainbows, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,
We your people, ours the journey
Now and ever, now and ever, now and ever more.**

Please stand in body or spirit.

Passing the Peace

Leader: One of our core values as God's church here in Neffs is extravagant welcome.

So repeat after me - No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,

ALL: No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,

Leader: you are welcome here.

ALL: you are welcome here.

Leader: And no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,

ALL: And, no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,

Leader: God loves you and so do we.

ALL: God loves you and so do we.

Leader: Please stand and greet each other, sharing God's love and welcome.

We send our love to those worshipping at home too.

*Opening Hymn

#458 Take My Life, and Let It Be Consecrated

Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

1. Take my life and let it be Consecrated, Lord, to Thee;

Take my hands and let them move

At the impulse of Thy love, At the impulse of Thy love.

2. Take my feet and let them be Swift and beautiful for Thee;

Take my voice and let me sing Always, only, for my King,

Always, only for my King.

3. Take my lips and let them be Filled with messages for Thee;

Take my silver and my gold, Not a mite would I withhold,

Not a mite would I withhold.

4. Take my love, my God, I pour At Thy feet its treasure store; Take myself and I will be Ever, only, all for Thee, Ever, only, all for Thee

During Summer Worship:

***A reminder to pick up your Children's Activity Bulletins at the door when you arrive.**

***Mornings with Ms. Tiffany**

Kids are invited to join Ms. Tiffany for stories, activities, crafts and fun every Sunday at 10:30 worship through August 20.

Pastors invite children forward to leave with Ms. Tiffany for a time designed just for them!

Children will be in the basement (or the gazebo when we're in the grove) and will return before worship is over. If worship ends early, parents are welcome to meet their children downstairs.

During the School Year:

Education Hour and Faith Formation for All Ages – 9:15-10:15am on Sundays

Children's Church – during 10:30am Worship for ages 3-grade 5.

Song: Go, Make a Diff'rence Angrisano, Tomaszek #199
Sing! Prayer and Praise

Musical notation for the song "Go, Make a Diff'rence". The notation is on a single staff in treble clef. It begins with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a common time signature (C). The melody starts with a whole rest, followed by a repeat sign. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter). The lyrics "Go make a diff - 'rence. We can make a diff - 'rence. Go make a diff - 'rence in the world." are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Asus (above the first whole rest), A (above the first G), Dm (above the first A), Bb (above the first Bb), and C (above the first C). There is a double bar line after the first A note.

— Go make a dif - f'rence. — We can make a dif - f'rence. — Go make a dif - f'rence in the world. —

Fine

B^bmaj⁷ Asus A Dm Am Am
Last time, Fine 1. 2.3.

Go make a diff - 'rence in the world. —

Scripture Reading

Mark 12 :38-44

As he taught, he said, "Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes, and to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and to have the best seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets! They devour widows' houses and for the sake of appearance say long prayers. They will receive the greater condemnation."

He sat down opposite the treasury, and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on."

Music Offering

You'll Never Walk Alone Oscar Hammerstein III & Richard Rodgers

Emily Bachl

The Message

Reimagine

Pastor Kris



lament of a gift
by hannah garrity
inspired by mark 12:38-44

In this painting, I have depicted two coins from the time of Jesus. Two. Two is not enough to live on. Economist Thomas Picketty's new book, *Capital and Ideology* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020), details how societies throughout the ages have structured inequality into their/ our economic systems. He argues that the economy is not a force of nature. Human ideology shapes the economy. Marshall Steinbaum sums up Picketty's new work: "In his sweeping new history, the economist systematically demolishes the conceit that extreme inequality is our destiny, rather than our choice."

In this text, Jesus agrees with Picketty. An exegesis of this text by Addison Wright³ establishes that Jesus is actually lamenting the widow's gift. Wright cites Jesus' overall viewpoint on the financial structures of the day, arguing that this cannot be an affirmation of the widow's selflessness. Rather, it must be a lament of the societal structures that cause the widow to give all of her resources to organized religion.

For me, the lament perspective on this traditional

stewardship text is transformational. It is inspiring me to engage financially with the Church in a much more personal way. With sudden clarity, I connected the fact that Jesus' Church is the financial ideology I believe in. The hypocrisy that Jesus observes in this text is the same hypocrisy that I have always struggled with as a member of the Church of the present. So, what actions can I take, what questions can I ask, and what conversations can I have to ensure that the Church I am giving to is the Church Jesus meant to create?

— hannah garrity

Entering into Prayer

Friends, I invite you into a time of embodied prayer, holding the dried beans you were given as you entered worship. In scripture, we learn of the Year of Jubilee—a time every fifty years when the edges of the crops are left for the poor and the hungry to glean, when families return home for rest and Sabbath, when debts are canceled and the harvest is shared. In our time of prayer, let us imagine what Jubilee could look like in our world. I invite you to take your red bean⁸ and clench it tightly in your left hand. As you do so, silently give thanks to God for all that you have—for the resources that nourish you and the love that sustains you. Let us pray.

(Time for silence.)

And now, I invite you to take your white bean and clench it tightly in your right hand. As you do so, silently pray for those who do not have enough, for those who hunger—for food, for rest, for justice. Let us pray.

(Time for silence.)

And now, I invite you to clench the beans in both of your fists and imagine the world God hopes for us—a world of enough for everyone. Imagine unfettered love—free and bold, wild and true, the kind of love that changes you. Imagine a home—safe and bright, with impromptu

dancing, meals around table, and laughter late into the night. Imagine faith like a compass— that guides the way you shop and vote, the way you love and hope; that asks questions and yet still believes, even despite uncertainty. And imagine a world where trees, bees, and all living things grow wild and free, where peace is the narrative and hope the currency; a world where news stories are testimonies and funerals are far between.

Can you imagine?

Yes, we can imagine.

And so, let us dare to dream. Let us clench our fists and imagine what could be.

Let us dare to make this dream reality.

With God's help, may it be so. Amen.

Directions:

During the offering you are invited to place their white beans in the offering plate with your financial gifts to represent our prayers for those who do not have enough.

Take home your red bean as a reminder to give thanks for all that you have and to remember our calling to make God's dream a reality.

After the service, we will collect the white beans from the offering plates to add to our mandala.

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.**

PRAYER SONG RESPONSE

#107 Amazing Grace Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of
God

**ALL: 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.**

NEWS ABOUT THE MINISTRY AND MISSION OF GOD'S CHURCH

OFFERING

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**Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC**

**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.

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Musical Offering

In Christ Alone with The Solid Rock
Keith Getty & Stuart Townend, Arr. Lloyd Larson,
Geoff Brace

Please stand in body or spirit.

Offering Response

#562 Take My Gifts Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal

**ALL: Take my gifts and let me love you,
God who first of all loved me,
Gave me light and food and shelter,
gave me life and set me free,
Now because your love has touched me,
I have love to give away,
Now the bread of love is rising,
loaves of love to multiply.**

Offering Prayer

Leader:

Jesus of Nazareth,

In scripture we hear of a woman who gave her last coin
away.

You pointed her out, but you did not say, "Go and do
likewise."

So we cannot help but wonder—did you point her out to
ask,

"Why does this one have so little when others have so
much?"

Did you point her out to help us see the injustice that led to
her suffering?

Maybe.

So today, for her, and for you, and for every person who
cannot afford to give to God

And put food on the table, we offer our gifts.

We pray that you would use them for your good.

Right what is wrong.

Balance the systems of injustice.
Use these gifts to build the world that we can only imagine
But you can bring forth.
In hope we pray,
Amen.

Benediction

ALL:

**We believe in God the Creator,
who, like a painter with a canvas,
imagined creation and breathed it into being.
We believe in Jesus,
who many years later,
walked this hurting world and showed us a new way to love.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
who prods us and pulls us,
leads us and guides us,
carries us and loves us into new life, day after day.
And we believe in the power of imagination,
a gift from God that allows us to dream dreams,
create anew, start over, try again, and live lives of hope.
So in response, together, as God's church,
We dare to dream.
We strive to love.
We try to imagine a new day.
And we walk together,
All with God's help.
Amen.**

***Hymn #6 This Is My Father's World**
Gold Hymnal (Hymns for the Family of God)

**1. This is my Father's world, And to my listening ears
All nature sings, and 'round me rings The music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought
Of rocks and tress, of skies and seas
His hand the wonders wrought.**

**2. This is my Father's world, The birds their carols raise,
The morning light, the lily white, Declare their Maker's praise.
This is my Father's world: He shines in all that's fair;
In the Rustling grass I hear Him pass,
He speaks to me everywhere.**

**3. This is my Father's world, O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems off so strong,
God is the ruler yet. This is my Father's world:
The battle is not done;
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heaven be one.**

Postlude Music

Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho Spiritual
Blake Hoppes

Summer Coffee Hour will continue on Sundays after 10:30
worship. Stop by in Memorial Hall for some cool lemonade,
juice, water, and a snack and visit with friends and pastors.

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
Last Week	11,378.00		In person
Calendar Year 2023 (Jan-May)	\$162,264.00	8:00 am	n/a
Calendar Year 2022 (Jan-May)	\$158,771.00	10:30 am	78
Change from Last Year	2.2%	Education Hour	
Budget FY 2022-23 (July-May)	\$397,230.00	2022 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-May))	\$374,108.00	Last Week:	\$100, 0lbs
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-5.8%	Total YTD:	2,472lbs, \$635
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>		OGHS	\$367.00

Presentations to the Glory of God

**In memory of Gordon Rothrock from daughters,
Lucille Kuhns, Leoma Kern, Lana Reitz**

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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