

**8 & 10:30am
December 8, 2024**

**Advent 2
Jerusalem: A Place of Waiting
PEACE**

GUESTS, Welcome to our faith community. To learn more about us please visit our website at www.unionucc.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/unionneffs. Let us know you're here by completing the Welcome Card in the racks in front of you and hand it to a pastor or drop it in the offering plate.

Vision Statement

UNION UCC: RELEVANT, ENGAGED, and GROWING

Mission Statement

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.

***No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.***

Union UCC is an Open and Affirming (ONA) Community.

Lay Reader: 8am Rosalie Snyder, 10:30 Janice Metzger

Ushers: 8am: Kerry Snyder, Tom Anderson, Larry Todd, Lorie Hackett

10:30am: Janice Metzger, Julie Johnson, Laura Kohler, Ralph Gioielli, Connie Gioielli, Carol James

Greeters: Geoff & Sara Jane Brace, Jen Haley

Sound: Mike Baer

Prelude Music

Emmanuel with O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Arr. Joel Raney
Blake Hoppes

Welcome to Union UCC and Worship Today!

Welcome & Announcements

Light for the Journey

Guide: On the way to Bethlehem, we travel to Jerusalem. The Temple is the site of the dramatic high point of Zechariah and Elizabeth's story of waiting so long for prayer to be answered. As Zechariah carries out priestly duties and Elizabeth waits outside with others, the usual and customary becomes anything but ordinary! An angelic messenger reveals a divine plan that leaves Zechariah literally speechless

Leader/Pastor: It feels poignant that this week we visit Jerusalem in our Advent story and the city is known as "the city of peace." Certainly we've been focused on the difficulties of prevailing peace in this turbulent part of the world even today. There is also the matter of our own "new Jerusalem" within. We wait for the day when we will feel more peace, have more peace, within ourselves. This week, we ask, "what are we waiting for?" and we learn that what happens within us *while* we wait is as important as the outcome. Can we be at peace—work for peace—"live peaceably"—even while waiting?

**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.**

**Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

**We're on our way
We're on our way
Dream of the day
When peace holds sway
With all the earth
In all our hearts
We're on our way
This is the day.**

The journey begins, and this candle will help light our way.

We are on our way to more peace.

Decrees and decisions affect our world and our lives as
they did in Jesus' day.

We are a people who long for Good News.

There are milestones that guide us to a better day.

God's light goes before us, we are not alone.

**We're on our way
We're on our way
Dream of the day
When peace holds sway
With all the earth
In all our hearts
We're on our way
This is the day.**

Opening Prayer and Words of Assurance

Holy and Living God, we pray to you in the midst of
unanswered questions.

Often we are anxious and impatient as we desperately

want to know outcomes and chart our life's path
with certainty.

Give us patience, God.

Call us to pause in peaceful surrender,
even and especially when the pieces of our lives
seem to be falling apart rather than getting put together.
Open our hearts to know your enduring presence
in this very moment, in this waiting.

We pray this in the name of your Son,
Jesus, the Christ, the Prince of Peace. **Amen.**

Let this be a marker of assurance that we are moving in a
faithful direction:

God is with us every step of our way toward the Love of
Bethlehem.

Jesus is being born into our lives even now.
The Spirit is transforming us in this place.

Peace be with you!
And also with you.

As people forgiven and freed,
I invite you to pass the Peace of Christ among you
[and those worshiping remotely, we are glad you are on the
journey with us!].

The Peace

***Please rise in body or spirit to greet each other and for the first song.**

***Opening Hymn** #190 Angels from the Realms of Glory
Gold Hymnal/Hymns for the Family of God

**ALL: Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story,**

**Now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant Light;
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

**Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations,
Ye have seen His natal star;
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!**

Please be seated.

**10:30 Worship Children's Time
Guest Readers: Ron Pope, Edie Fella**

Children's Church – during 10:30am Worship for ages 3-grade 5. Kids start in worship with their family and are invited forward for a children's time, They then leave with Ms. Tiffany and return before worship is over. They will return to worship before it's over and if not, please pick up your children in Room 100. If you want your child to stay in worship with you, please let them know.

**Little donkey, little donkey
On the dusty road
Got to keep on plodding onwards**

**With your precious load.
Been a long time, little donkey
Through the winter's night
Don't give up now, little donkey
Bethlehem's in sight.**

**Kids are invited to the Education Hour and Faith Formation
for All Ages – 9:15-10:15am on Sundays, ages 3 to grade 7.**

Music Offering Prepare the Way, O Zion
Words by Frans Mikael Franzen
Adapted by Charles P. Price
Music by Larry Shackley

8:00 Heritage Choir

10:30 Horizon Choir

First Scripture Reading

Romans 12: 9-18

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Gospel Reading

Luke 1: 5-17

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of

Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Sermon Pastor Carrie Beleno

Book for this series: On the Way to Bethlehem Rob Fuquay
Copies are on the table in the lobby/foyer or at your favorite bookstore.

Prayer Journals for this series are on the table in the lobby/foyer.

Guided by Prayer

Guide: We begin our prayer time today remembering that when we need guidance the most, we can turn to God in prayer. Today we are guided by Peace.

Lead Me, Guide Me

Lead me, guide me, a - long the way, for if you
lead me, I can - not stray. Lord, let me walk each
day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

Leader: Let us pray:

God of Peace, we come to you today longing for your presence in our lives and with all those who suffer—in body, mind, or spirit. We pray this day for ...

God of Peace, we come to you today so deeply grateful for celebrations, triumphs, and even small steps toward the lives we seek and the world we desire. We pray this day for...

Holy God, we know you are near. We know that every step along the way to Bethlehem in this Advent season is a step closer to renewed life in Jesus, the Christ. We know that your Spirit resides within us, growing day by day into the fullness of

Peace. In this moment, we pause in silence, marking your presence with awe and asking you to fill us and guide us, along our journey.

Moments of Silence

May we live by the prayer you taught us...

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.**

**NEWS ABOUT THE MINISTRY AND MISSION OF GOD'S
CHURCH AT UNION**

OFFERING



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Neffs, Pennsylvania

**Thank you for your faithful generosity and for all that you do
to help our church be
*Relevant - Engaged - Growing***

• **ELECTRONIC GIVING** <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/home> or use the QR code with your cell phone. Choose an ongoing regular donation or a single donation with your credit or debit



card. (Help us with fees if you can.)

- **FREE Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app**

Look for our church Union United Church of Christ, Neffs, PA and register your information to contribute.



Vanco Mobile

- **Venmo @unionuccneffs** Make a donation or pay for a fundraiser or event. Complete “What’s this for?” See QR code.



Venmo

- **Cash or checks (to “Union UCC”)** Place in the offering plate with a member offering envelope or guest envelope (in the seat racks) or drop in the mail if you’re not in person. Contact John Harting (610-799-2508) or Don Penrod (610-972-8719) or Pastor Kris if you have questions or if you’d like to learn more about other giving options or legacy gifts to Union.

Christmas Mission Offering – Sharing God’s Love with the World

The Christmas Mission Offerings will go to Phoebe Home and Phoebe Ministries in Allentown and Disaster Relief through the Penn Northeast Conference (and Penn Southeast Conference). Please share your financial support by using the Christmas Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or blank envelope marked - Christmas Mission, or donate online at <https://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/> OR <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/campaign/C-12DNK>

Phoebe Home & Phoebe Ministries

Phoebe Ministries provides faith-based communities and services for senior living, including independent apartments, personal care, skilled nursing, memory support services, short-term rehab, and geriatric care

Our waiting is transforming us into those who know the gift of dependence on God. We release our expectations and open to new possibilities we have not imagined. Peace, not panic, perseveres.

Benediction

And now as you go forth from this place,
know that all the places you encounter in the world
will contain signs and markers of God's work among us.

So keep your senses alert,
your perception wide,
and your heart open
to new discoveries along the way.

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray,
cast out our fear, and draw us near; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.**

**We're on our way
We're on our way
Dream of the day
When peace holds sway
With all the earth
In all our hearts
We're on our way
This is the day.**

***Closing Hymn**

#105 Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear
Black Hymnal/New Century Hymnal

**“Gentle Joseph, Joseph dear,
stay with me, for the baby's near;
God will surely your goodness hear,
as you will love this new-born child,” says Mary.**

**“Gladly Mary, Mary mine,
I will cradle the child divine;
Here will heaven and earth combine,
for you will bear God's child, O dearest Mary.”**

**“Peace to all and God's good-will,”
heaven and earth with this song will fill;
Soon will God, in the evening still,
be born in Bethlehem, the child of Mary.**

Postlude Music

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentleman Traditional
Blake Hoppes

Worship Theme: c. Worship Design Studio

Worship Design Team: Kathy Bonsell, Claire Kern,
Deb Topp, Pastor Kris, Tiffany Lakatosh, Kathy Milander,
Maryann Puia

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
Last Week	\$7,384.00	8 AM	57
Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-Oct.)	\$320,290.00	10:30 AM	129
Calendar Year 2023 (Jan.-Oct.)	\$ 308,275.00	Online Views	418
Change from Last Year	3.9%	Sunday School	12
Budget FY 2024-25 (July-Oct.)	\$115,200.00	God First	25
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-Oct.)	\$114,112.00	Faith on Tap	30
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	-0.9%	Breathe	15
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>		2024 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
		Last Week:	\$, bs
		Total YTD:	\$1300, 6,090lbs

Presentations to the Glory of God

Good News Sponsor— for \$20 help us cover the costs of advertising on social media, mailings, and local papers.

Children’s Bulletin Sponsor— for \$8 cover the cost of bulletins for children.

Send to Union UCC through your offering envelope or online marked Spread the Good News or 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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