

Purveyors of Awe

Elements for Curating a Life
of Spiritual Depth

“Meaning”
Lent One



March 16, 2025

8:00am & 10:30am

Youth Sunday

“iBelong: Everyone Has A Home Here”

Church Family Worship

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 on life's journey,
you are welcome here.***

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

Lay Reader: Youth Group

Ushers: 8am Debbie Romig, Connie Gioielli, Dixie Gross

10:30am : Deb Wenner, Maryann Puia, Gloria Toner,

Carol Stout, Marianne Kitzmiller, Donna Christman, Brian Horwith

Greeters: Brynn & Jon Buskirk, Sally Saltzer, Devon Kuharik

Sound: Dawn Dengler

*I, through the abundance of your steadfast love,
will enter your house;
I will bow down toward your holy temple
in awe of you.
– Psalm 5:7*

Awe is a profound emotional response that can significantly impact our wellbeing and perception of the world. Awe often arises from experiences that transcend our usual understanding, such as viewing vast landscapes, listening to powerful music, encountering extraordinary acts of kindness, or feeling heightened devotion and a Divine Presence connecting us all. To be a “Purveyor of Awe” is to be intentional about curating a life of spiritual depth. This has implications not only for one’s own life, but also as motivation to tend to the wellbeing of others. Let us approach this Lent with awe as we explore the elements of Beauty, Wonder, Meaning, Curiosity, Delight, Connection, and Self-Giving.

A purveyor is someone who spreads or promotes a particular idea or who deals in a particular good.

Prelude Music

Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart
Tune: Morecambe, Frederick C. Atkinson
Blake Hoppes

**Welcome to Union UCC!
Welcome & Announcements**

**Over the Threshold
Madison Eckhart & Isaac Brace**

Leader: Mystic, author, and Benedictine monk Brother

David Steindl-Rast said this: “It is through wholehearted living that meaning flows into our lives... You see the sandpiper and something in you says a wholehearted yes, or you hear the rain and your whole being says yes to it. It’s a special kind of yes; it’s an unconditional yes.”

ALL Sing:

**Open my eyes that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!**

We continue our journey through Lent taking on a special lens, that of a deep and profound sense of awe. This is a spiritual journey in the tradition of ancient biblical poets, of mystics from yesteryear or today. In our scientific day, researchers are confirming what these poets and mystics knew all along—awe is essential for a life of wellbeing. In a time when we are flooded with a culture of competing soundbites, we are slowing down and spending time on a journey that leads to a precious stream of the deeper meanings of ordinary life.

ALL Sing:

**Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
Open the eyes of my heart,
I want to see you
I want to see you**

The good news is that we humans are “meaning-mongers.” Our brains are wired to interpret the ordinary stuff of life in

metaphorical ways so that we can make some sense of it all. We long for meaningful lives in which we are more sure about the direction of our lives and about what we are to bring to this world. We yearn for experiences that leave us feeling more fulfilled. When we are “on the lookout” for meaning in our lives, we live at a deeper level, and mere existence turns into purpose. Let us pray...

Awe-inspiring God,

we come together this day because we need to be reminded to see through the lens of deeper meaning.

Too often, we write off the ordinary days of our lives as a drone of time passing through the mass of media messages about what life is supposed to be about.

Open us to perceive anew.

Inspire us to receive our surroundings with awe.

Forgive us when we are distracted by the droll of the scroll rather than lifting our senses to that which is right in front of

US.

Be with us on this journey
as we seek again to marvel at your works.

ALL Sing:

**Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.**

**Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!**

Know that your life is inherently meaningful
because of the One who gave you life.

God forgives us. Jesus embraces us. The Spirit enlivens us.

We are whole.

With awe, we accept this belovedness.

And all God's people say, “**Amen.**”

The Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

I invite you to share the peace of Christ with those around you, [remembering to greet those online with a wave to the camera].

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

***Opening Hymn #86 When Morning Gilds the Skies (New Century Hymnal, black)**

1. When morning gilds the skies
My heart awaking cries
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Alike at work and prayer
One purpose I declare: May Jesus Christ be praised

2. New strength comes night or day
When from the heart we say
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let sin and evil fear
When this sweet chant they hear: May Jesus Christ be
praised

3. Discordant human kind
In this your concord find
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let all the earth around
Ring joyous with the sound: May Jesus Christ be praised

4. Be this, while life is mine
My canticle divine
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this the eternal song

Through all the ages long: May Jesus Christ be praised

Please be seated.

In Awe of Children
Lead by: Miranda Brown & Everett Lightner

10:30 Worship - Children's Time

What a Wonderful World Thiele/Weiss

ALL SING:

**I see trees of green
Red roses too
I see them bloom
For me and you
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world**

Today is Church Family Worship. Children will be invited forward for a children's time and will return to sit with their parents afterwards. There are activity bags available.

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

ALL SING:

**I see trees of green
Red roses too
I see them bloom
For me and you
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world**

Music Offering

Amazing Grace John Newton

Instrumental Ensemble: **Lucas Maxwell, Connor Maxwell, Andy Dyszel, Isaac Brace, Mike Baer**

Contemporary Reading

Reader: Our first reading is a contemporary one—an excerpt from Brian McLaren in his book *Life After Doom: Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart*:

“...the neocortex of the brain...makes language possible and gives meaning to the word ‘meaning.’ It enables me to talk to myself and observe myself. It integrates current awareness with memory of past experiences and with the ability to imagine future scenarios. It organizes my experience in stories with beginnings, middles, and ends. It helps me think critically, creatively, and independently. Without the meaning committee [in my brain], there would be no Bach or the Beatles, no Galileo or Einstein, nor Moses or Mary or Jesus or the Buddha or Mohammed. It is the most recently evolved part of me, and frankly, it still has a lot of bugs and glitches that haven’t been worked out yet.”

McLaren, B. D. (2024). *Life after doom: Wisdom and courage for a world falling apart*. St. Martin’s Publishing Group.

Ancient Reading

Excerpts from Psalm 19

Reader: The ancient poet who wrote Psalm 19 opened themselves to the wisdom and understanding of the meaning of life through awe at the handiwork of God.

Creation itself declares understanding, without needing words to tell it. Sometimes meaning can be found simply through a feeling. Hear this poet now:

*The heavens herald your glory, O God,
and the skies display your handiwork.
Day after day they tell their story,
and night after night they reveal
the depth of their understanding.
Without speech, without words,
without even an audible voice,
their cry echoes through all the world,
and their message reaches the ends of the earth...
Holding you in awe, YHWH, is purifying; it endures.
Your decrees are steadfast, and all of them just.
They are more precious than gold,
than the purest of gold,
and sweeter than honey,
than honey fresh from the comb.
In them your faithful people find instruction;
there is great reward in keeping them.*

In Awe of the Word High School Seniors

- Hannah Minnich, Whitehall High School**
- Garet Hill, Parkland High School**
- Zane Roth, Northern Lehigh High School**
- Ryleigh Minnich, Commonwealth Charter Academy**
- Emma Milander, Parkland High School**

**Looking to learn, study, or pray more? Journals for this series
can be found on the table in the Lobby.
Here's a book our Friday and Sunday classes are doing.
Copies are in the lobby.**

The Final Days by Matt Rawle The four New Testament Gospels aren't the same story, but they offer the same Resurrection hope. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John devote most of their story detailing Jesus' last week in Jerusalem, all highlighting Jesus' triumphant entry into the city, the suffering and humiliation of the cross, and the empty tomb come Sunday morning, but the stories they tell aren't quite the same.

Approaching an Awesome God
Our Prayers
Nolan Buskirk & Noah Roth

Visio Divina Video: Visio Divina is translated as "divine seeing". It is related to the prayer form Lectio Divina (divine reading), but instead of Scripture, this form of prayer uses visual elements to help set your mind on prayer. It allows God to speak into your heart through the image.

Holy and Living God, we approach this time of prayer, yearning for meaning for our lives. With all our senses, we open to you.

Give us lenses of awe with which to perceive and love others as you perceive and love us. We imagine in our mind's eye now the people in our lives, the people of our communities, and the people of our world. Each of them is beloved by you, and this alone creates awe in us. We especially lift up those who need our prayers in this moment all of those on our prayer list who need you more than we may know.

For all these people and those we name in our hearts,
Hear our prayer, Awesome God.

Give us lenses of awe with which to perceive and love your creation as you perceive and love it. Each butterfly, each shell, each sunset reminds us that symbols of the meaning of life are everywhere. You are making all things new all around us. Help us to care for the nature around us.

For all these places, creatures, and lifeforms, and those we name in our hearts,

Hear our prayer, Awesome God.

Give us lenses of awe with which to perceive and love life as you perceive and love the life you have given us. Open us to a more meaningful existence. Help us to know that our existence itself already has meaning and we are not required to earn it or deserve it, simply open to it. Slow us down in this season of Lent so that we might savor anew the gift of life. We pause in this silence, setting intentions of awe for the week ahead.

For all these intentions,

Hear our prayer, Awesome God.

Let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us...

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.**

Sung Prayer Response

This Is My Father's World (Words Mark Hayes)

ALL Sing:

**You are a great and awesome God,
your wonders we proclaim.**

**You are our Rock, our Strength, our Shield,
from age to age the same.**

**You forgive us all our sins,
you transform us with your love.**

**In joyful, grateful, hearts we sing
you are a great and awesome God.**

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



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Neffs, Pennsylvania

Responding with Awe

OFFERING

Easter Mission Offering

Please share your financial support by using the Easter Mission Offering envelope in your envelope packet, or blank envelope or a check marked "Easter Mission", or donate online at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z51X/campaign/C-12H63>

The Chemo Bag Their Mission Statement - The CHEMO Bag, Inc, in partnership with the generosity of our community, corporate sponsors and volunteers is committed to providing care bags filled with items to provide comfort to men and women in the Lehigh Valley and surround areas

undergoing chemotherapy treatments. CHEMO - Caring, Helping, Encouraging, Motivating, Others. Union UCC held a successful packing session for The Chemo Bag and plans to hold another one soon.

World Central Kitchen

In 2010, Chef Jose Andres, founded World Central Kitchen to feed people around the world after a disaster. Quote - 'When you need medical service, you bring doctors and nurses. When you need the rebuilding of infrastructure, you bring in engineers and architects. And if you have to feed large groups of people, you need professional chefs'. WCK is first to the front lines, providing fresh meals in response to humanitarian, climate, and community crises.

In 2024, WCK provided help to families in 20 countries, providing over 109 million meals. Recently they served meals to families and first responders of the California fires.

Be an ambassador for Union UCC and tell your friends and neighbors about our church!

Thank you for your prayers, participation, and financial support which helps us be a church that is relevant, engaged, and 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.)



Electronic Giving

• **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.

Music Offering

Amazing Grace (My Chairs are Gone)

Chris Tomlin & Louis Giglio

Garet Hill

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

***Offering Response**

Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary

#187 Sing! Prayer and Praise

All Sing:

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary

pure and holy, Tried and true:

With thanksgiving I’ll be a living sanctuary for you.

God empower me to be a witness for you,

Acting boldly, in your name:

Seeking justice, where there is hurting

offering hope where there is pain.

We Go Forth With Awe

Benediction

Noah Roth & Lucas Maxwell

Benedictions are blessings. And blessings are all around us. So for this season, instead of bowing your head as I offer a Benediction blessing, I invite you to open your palms in a position of receiving, and hold your head high, imagining a radiant stream of light from above shining upon you and everything else around you. And this week when you need to be reminded of the wonder-filled world, take this stance again. Open your palms to receive, look around to perceive, and notice one small thing that can light up your heart for a moment.

And now may you go forth
remembering Brother Steindl-Rast's words:

"It is through wholehearted living
that meaning flows into our lives."

Be a purveyor of awe this week.

Live wholeheartedly and expectantly each day,
keeping watch for the deeper meaning surrounding you.
Say an unconditional "yes" to the simplest of moments
as you invite awe to live and breathe new life in you.

Be a "purveyor of awe,"
curating a life of spiritual depth
that inspires others to join you on the journey.

May the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of Awe,
the Holy One-in-Three,
be with you now and throughout these days,
Amen.

***Closing Hymn #407 How Firm a Foundation (New Century Hymnal, black)**

**1. How firm a foundation for you has been laid
By God in the word, in the sacrifice paid
What more can God say than to you has been said
To you, who for refuge to Jesus have fled?**

**2. Fear not, I am with you, o be not dismayed
For I am your God, I will still give you aid
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand
Upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand**

**3. When through the deep waters I call you to go
The rivers of woe shall not over you flow
For I will be with you, your troubles be bless
Delivering you from your deepest distress**

Postlude Music

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross
Tune: Near the Cross William H. Doane
Blake Hoppes

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)		Attendance Last Week	
Last Week		8 AM	42
Calendar Year 2025 (Jan.-Feb.)	\$ 59,944.00	10:30 AM	72
Calendar Year 2024 (Jan.-Feb.)	\$ 70,110.00	Online Views	9
Change from Last Year	-14.5%	Sunday School	11
Budget FY 2024-25 (July-Feb.)	\$ 275,550.00	God First	25
Actual Fiscal Year-to-Date (July-Feb.)	\$ 284,375.00	Faith on Tap	30
Difference in Giving vs. Budget	3.2%	Breathe	15
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>		2024 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
		Last Week:	\$, lbs
		Total YTD:	\$600, 870lbs
Blanket Sunday \$2,026.00		Souper Bowl \$994.00	

Presentations to the Glory of God
Continued healing for Ron Snyder.
-Carol Barry

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.

CCLI LICENSE # 1523377 / Streaming # 20407732
 One License #A714125 / Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A714125