

In response to the gospel, we will love God,
love one another, and love the world
by making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Union Church Staff

Billy Younger	Lead Pastor
Tom Ribar	Associate Pastor of Youth & Families
Monica Laughery	Office Manager
Kellyn von Arx	Assistant Director of Youth & Families
John M. Seybert	Director of Music Ministries
Anthony Calvario	Praise Team Leader
Winona Johnston	Discipleship Coordinator
Sue Strunk	Organist
Rebecca Safko	Treasurer
George Shumek	Financial Secretary
Katie C. Parr	Childcare Center Director
Carl Reed	Sexton
Sally Andrews	Pastoral Care Coordinator
Mimi Massucci	Wedding Coordinator
Sue Shumek	New Member Coordinator

2018 Leadership of Union Church

Session Elders:

Clerk of Session-Sally Andrews
 Administrative Support Team-Sam Wilson
 Childcare Committee-Gail Jackson
 Discipleship Committee-Winona Johnston
 Fellowship Committee-JoAnn Barker
 Finance Committee-Jeff Scott
 Outreach/Mission Team-Scott Davis
 Nominating Committee-Mariann Bertocchi
 Safety & Security Team-Tim Jackson
 Worship Committee-Tom MacLachlan
 Capital Campaign Construction Project-Don Jukes

Trustees:

Donald Lee Tidball, President
 Bob Winning, Vice-President
 Michael Carr
 Nick Cue
 Dan Hancock
 Chauncey Smith

Deacons:

Cathy Scott, Moderator
 Gwen Davidson, Secretary
 Judy Bocek, Treasurer
 Karen Connell
 Betty Fair
 Nancy Fotovich
 Karen Jakub
 C.J. Johnston
 Sally Lickovich
 Carole MacLachlan
 Kristin Mickle
 Sue Shumek
 Michelle Smith
 Pedro Torrez
 Bob Weber

HILLTOP HERALD

Luke 12:35-37 (ESV) "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men [and women] who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them."

Dressed for action...I imagine a public safety officer sleeping in her uniform, ready at a moment's notice to spring into action. I imagine an on-call nurse, dressed in his scrubs, tools of the trade at the ready, prepared to respond to crisis at any time.

Jesus does not speak these words from Luke's gospel for those who are particularly holy, or who serve in "full time ministry" (whatever that means). No, to Jesus, a disciple is a minister (servant) and a minister is a disciple. All disciples must heed the call to "stay dressed for action" and "keep your lamps burning." These metaphors imply a certain level of preparedness by the disciple. A disciple of Jesus will make a conscious effort to proactively prepare for service to the King and the Kingdom.

Of course, weekly worship with the people of God at Union plays a central role in our being "dressed for action." In addition, let me suggest two additional opportunities to help you "stay dressed for action" and to "keep your lamp burning."

Gather and learn. Take advantage of the Growth Group opportunities throughout the year. Toward that end, on March 13th, we will begin a 5-week Growth Group focused on deepening our understanding of our faith. The series, *I am Reformed and Why it Matters*, will help us dig below the surface of Christian basics. Together we will discover the Biblical foundations for our Reformed tradition and the distinct theological commitments that entails. Being Reformed is more than an academic concern. A Reformed commitment shapes everything from our prayer life and our worship, to our view of sin and redemption, and our understanding of our own calling to follow Jesus in day-to-day life. *I am Reformed and Why it Matters* will be held on Wednesdays during lent, March 13-April 10, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the Noble House. Our primary reading will be scripture, although additional reading will be recommended for those who wish to engage at a deeper level.

Travel and serve. Participate in mission outside the walls of Union Church. Toward that end, we will share in another joint summer mission opportunity with Mt. Pisgah Church. We will travel to Jackson, Mississippi, July 12th – 20th, and spend the week working with the John and Vera Mae Perkins Foundation (www.ivmpf.org). This will be an incredible week of learning about the civil rights era, practicing racial reconciliation, and serving with an at-risk neighborhood in Jackson, the state capital of Mississippi. I am excited for you to meet John Perkins and the folks who help run his foundation. John is an 86-year young civil rights leader...maybe the most important evangelical voice from that era. I guarantee that you will be inspired by his passionate and deeply Biblical message of Love and Justice. He writes,

We live in a broken world. How should we react? No doubt, some actions lessen the pain – and that's a good thing. But neither clenched fists nor helping hands alone will bring about the complete transformation that God wants. Only love can touch us at the point of our pain and begin to heal us and make us whole – individually and collectively. We are called to love...I often tell people that justice is a stewardship and economic issue, but truthfully, I think love is as well. Justice and love are intimately tied together in this way. Caring for those who have the least, loving our neighbors as we love ourselves, showing mercy to those around us – these are all issues of love, but they are also issues of justice. We cannot have true justice unless it is motivated by love, just as God's greatest act of justice, sending Jesus to die for us, was motivated by love.

Come travel with us to Jackson and experience "the whole Gospel for whole people!"

I hope you will stretch yourself and prayerfully consider the above as a helpful way to "stay dressed for action."

Peace...Tom

~ THE HILLTOP HERALD IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE ON THE NEWS AND EVENTS PAGE OF THE UNION CHURCH WEBSITE ~

2019 PUBLICATIONS:
 April 7th with ALL articles due by noon on April 2nd • June 2nd with ALL articles due by noon on May 28th
 July 28th with ALL articles due by noon on July 23rd •



UNION CHURCH
 6165 Steubenville Pike, McKees Rocks, PA 15136-1338 • 412.787.1818 • fax 412.787.8126 • www.unionpresbychurch.org

YOUTH MINISTRY (Grades 6-12)

Lots of events coming up for students in 6th - 12th grade! To sign up contact Kellyn von Arx, Assistant Director of Youth and Families (412.337.6417 / klvonarx@gmail.com) OR check out the Youth ministries page on the church website.

30-Hour Famine: February 22-23, 2019 This event is an overnight lock-in at the church. Students go without food for 30-hours (we will have juice and water) and collect sponsors to raise funds for hunger all over the world. During the lock-in students participate in games and activities to help them understand the issue of hunger and why, as followers of Christ, we should be a part of the solution. Students can join the fundraising team and participate in the 30-hour famine, even if they are not able to participate in the over-night event.

Adventure Weekend Spring Retreat: April 12-14, 2019 @ Teen Quest. Annual Spring Retreat, open to all students (6th-12th grade). Cost \$120/student. Sign-up and payment is due by March 31, 2019.

High School Camp: July 8-12, 2019, Pigeon Forge, TN. This is the same conference the high school ministry went to last year. It was so good, we are planning on going back! This trip is only open to students who are in 9th-12th grade during the 2018-19 school year. The total cost of the trip is \$420/student. A \$100 deposit is due by February 25, 2019 to complete the sign-up. Final payments will be due by June 30, 2019.

Union Church Mission Trip: July 12 - 20, 2019, Jackson, MS. Information meeting: February 17th @ 12:30 in the Noble House. The cost of this trip will be \$500/participant. \$250 after fundraising. This trip is open to any student in 6th - 12th grade (this is a "multi-generational" whole church trip, so parents can sign-up too!). Due to the unique situation of our church mission trip starting as the high school trip ends, we are encouraging the high school students to take part in both trips, but we understand this might not be possible for every student. We will make transportation arrangements for students who can only take part in one trip.

Surf City: Aug 4 - 9, 2019, Silver Lake, MI. This trip is put on by the same organization that holds Laurelville Mud Weekends. This trip is only open to students in 6th - 8th grade during the 2018-19 school year. The total cost of the trip is \$420/student. A \$100 deposit is due by February 25, 2019 to complete the sign-up. Final payments will be due by July 28, 2019.

Building authentic faith that the students of Union Church can carry on to college and beyond.

- » Youth Bible Study (6th-12th grade)—Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00p.m.
- » Middle School Youth Group (6th-8th grade)—Sundays, 6:30-7:30p.m. . .message and hangout.
- » High School Youth Group (9th-12th grade)—Sundays, 8:00-9:00p.m. . .message and hangout.

 follow us: unionyouthministry

Youth Ministry Contacts:

* Kellyn von Arx, Assistant Director of Youth & Families | kellyn@unionpresbychurch.org | 412.337.6417
* Rev. Tom Ribar, Associate Pastor of Youth & Families | tbarib@outlook.com | 412.977.9454

OUTREACH-MISSION TEAM

Meet: 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7p.m.
—all are welcome!—

Vista Coffee Project - proceeds go to the global mission effort: Christ for the City International, El Salvador, San Salvador. The program will help to raise money to buy land and build their own, more permanent, facility.

Homeless Camp Ministry Project - Third Saturday of the month (Saturday, February 16), up to six(6) Union Church volunteers carpool from Union at 11:20a.m., or meet by 11:55a.m. at Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community Church at 2700 Jane Street, Southside, Pittsburgh. We prepare approximately 50 bagged lunches and deliver them to homeless camps around the city. Volunteers must be age 15+, wear heavy shoes/boots, prepared to hike on hilly trails, railroad tracks, and duck under bridges to serve in this outreach ministry. Hot Metal supplies a 'Care Closet' with clothes, shoes, gloves, toiletries, and camping supplies to give to folks living outside. 2019 service dates: February 16, June 15, August 17, October 19, and November 16

"The Table" - This outreach provides a meal through Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community missional ministry at 2700 Jane Street, Southside Pittsburgh: Union's Outreach-Mission Team and volunteers provide a meal for 85 to 100 people. We need volunteers to prepare each meal, bake brownies, cookies, or a dessert. We have 6-8 volunteers travel to the Southside to 'assemble' and serve the meal and assist in dishes & clean-up of the site. Some leave the church at 3:45p.m., or others just meet at The Table at 4:30p.m. and the meal is served at 5:30p.m., clean-up is done by 6:30p.m. 2019 Meal Service dates: March 26, July 25, September 24, October 29, and Thanksgiving Day, November 28. Pray, Cook, Bake, Serve, Clean, Care, Pray!

Pleasant Valley Men's Shelter at Northside Common Ministries- Union volunteers serve a meal to the 22 men residing at the shelter on the North Side, Pittsburgh. Leave Union around 6:30p.m. to head to the Northside. 2019 meal service dates: March 14, September 12, and November 14. Contact Tom MacLachlan (412.626.9146) or Joan Richards (412.787.1559) for more information.

World Vision Intergenerational Service - World Vision International Distribution Headquarters @ 110 Overlook Drive, Sewickley, PA. Union Church 2017 Saturday 9a.m.-noon. We package clothing to be distributed to inner-city or international locations. Age 12 & up. 2019 service work dates: April 13, and October 12.

VOICe in Butler County - VOICe provides free and confidential services to individuals and families who are victims of violent crime. VOICe also provides confidential Women's Shelters. 2019 donation drop-off dates: February 28; April 25; June 27; and August 29. Details of the needs for each month will be posted in the weekly bulletin.

⇒ **2019 Outreach-Mission Team meetings at 7p.m. in the Noble House:** 2nd Tuesday of the month—March 12
⇒ Everyone is welcome to meetings! Contacts: Scott K. Davis 412.370.7899

CHILDCARE CENTER NEWS

March is a busy month for the childcare center. Students will celebrate Dr. Seuss Week, St. Patrick's Day, and the First Day of Spring! The childcare center is gearing up for Read Across America Week (March 4-8th) when we will celebrate the late, great Dr. Seuss! On Monday, students will wear their crazy socks to school and read "Fox in Socks." On Tuesday, students will rock their crazy hair and read "The Hair Book." On Wednesday, they will wear their favorite hat to school and read "Old Hat, New Hat." On Thursday, students will get festive in their Christmas outfits and read "The Grinch." And, on Friday, students will finish the week off with pajama day and read "The Sleep Book." We will then transition in to a fun-filled St. Patrick's Day celebration where students will enjoy a special green snack, sequence the colors of the rainbow, create classroom leprechaun snacks, toss gold coins in to a pot, and learn an Irish jig! ALCOSAN will also be visiting the center at the end of the month to celebrate Spring, and students will participate in their scholastic outreach program. Representatives will be presenting "If I Were a Seed, What Would I Need?" to our preschool students and together they will identify the needs of a seed and model seed germinating life cycles. We are looking forward to warmer weather and hopefully returning to our playground soon!

Katie C. Parr, Director | 412.787.7553 phone | 412.787.8126 fax | childcare@unionpresbychurch.org

FELLOWSHIP TEAM

Meet: 1st Tuesday of the month at 7p.m.

The Fellowship Team will begin planning the Palm Sunday Brunch for Sunday, April 14th. Would you like to join the Fellowship Team and help to plan, create, prepare, and/or serve at one of the monthly events? Volunteer when you are available (one Sunday a month or one Sunday a year)—we share times and tasks. Come to a meeting in 2019 at 7p.m. on the 1st Tuesday of the month (March 5th)—we welcome and need you!

Contact: JoAnn Barker 412.494.5507

KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS GROUP

Meet: 1st & 3rd Monday of the month at 9:30a.m. & 6p.m.

Looking for an outreach/mission project? Come and learn how to knit or crochet baby afghans and laprobes.

In 2018 our dedicated group made 319 baby afghans and laprobes, Christmas tree hats, and hats for the ongoing Deacons "Warmer Basket". We give afghans to each baby of Union Church and Union Childcare Center; and thru Magee Women's Hospital, we are able to bless the less fortunate newborns. Since 2001 we have made a total of 4,743 baby afghans and laprobes.

We thank God for leading us in this ministry and we thank all of you who continue to support us with yarn and monetary donations.

We meet the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month in the lounge at 9:30a.m. Please consider joining us in this outreach opportunity. For additional information, contact Lorraine (412.452.0297) or Ellen (724.601.6268)

DEACONS

Welcome New Deacons!

We are very fortunate this year for four new Deacons that so willingly have offered to serve for the next three years. We would like to welcome Betty Fair, Bob Weber, Pedro Torrez, and Kristin Mickle to our Board of Deacons. Carole MacLachlan is joining us for another three-year term, Michelle Smith for a two-year term and Sue Shumek is currently serving the last year of her term. Through the generous donations of the congregation and community we have been able to serve 166 food pantry clients, provide Giant Eagle Gift certificates, and provide emergency funds which include rent, utility and medical bills. Our Deacons also serve a meal at The Table in the summer, coordinate and deliver weekly altar flowers, as well as flowers for Christmas and Easter. We would like to thank Kristin Mickle for thinking of the food pantry as recent recipients of an abundance of hams that her company provided at Christmas. Her generosity was most appreciated.

Please note: we accept donations of men, women, and children clothing, plus household items.

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in" Matthew 25:35

Submitted by: Cathy Scott, Deacon Moderator

THANK YOU!

Union Presbyterian Church's 2019 Collection

raised:

2019

\$807.50

Thanks to your efforts this year, more dollars have been raised, more lives have been changed and the nation has seen the impact of people working together to help those in need. Thank you for working to transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving.



February 3, 2019



discipleSHIP Children's Ministries

**9:15a.m. Contemporary Worship Service
with discipleSHIP Children's Ministries*
including Nursery Care***

11a.m. Traditional Worship Service with Nursery Care*

Preschool (age 3-4)* learns "God Made Me, God Loves Me, God is Always With Me".

Elementary (K-grade 5)* creatively get to know God through Bible teachings built around monthly virtues or characteristics of God.

Nursery Care (infants-age 2)* Children will be cared for by gentle, loving, compassionate hands while you attend the worship service.

EASTER EGG HUNT



Plan to join us

Palm Sunday, April 14th

2:00-3:30 p.m.

Activities include:

crafts, face painting, games, a visit from the Easter Bunny
Photographer will be present to take photos

Age specific Easter Egg Hunt(s):
birth-2 years, 3-5 years, k-2nd grade, and 3rd-5th grade

Please leave your baskets at home.
Bags will be decorated by the kids to collect eggs.

For more information, contact
Winona Johnston, Children's Ministries Coordinator
winonaj@verizon.net

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR . . .

ASH WEDNESDAY begins the season of the Church Year known as Lent, which begins forty days prior to Easter and is characterized by a focus on repentance, fasting, prayer, and the needs of others. The purpose is to set aside time for reflection on Jesus—His suffering and His sacrifice, His life, death, burial and resurrection. The season of Lent reminds Christians of the words of Jesus in Matthew 16:24, "*If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*" The way to Easter is the way of the cross. As the first step in the Lenten journey, the Ash Wednesday service invites us to acknowledge our mortality, our sinfulness and our dependence upon the grace of God. This year we'll join the Mt. Pisgah family at their church for a community Ash Wednesday service (with the imposition of ashes) at 7pm — beginning with a light meal at 6 pm. Come and let us begin the Lenten journey together.

SAVE THE DATE: Summer J.A.M.

. . . June 17-21, 9a.m.—12p.m.
Registration begins March 17th

