

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
Kelsey Liwosz	Childcare Center Director
Carl Reed	Sexton
Sally Andrews	Pastoral Care Coordinator
Mimi Massucci	Wedding Coordinator
Sue Shumek	New Member Coordinator

2019 Leadership of Union Church

Session Elders:

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

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

"God is Here!"

Dear Congregation of God,

Here we are quickly moving toward the end of summer. It's almost August, and very soon the pace of church life will pick up once again as the congregation (my family and me included) returns home from summer events and trips.

On September 8th we will not only be dedicating our new entryway to the Lord, but we will also be celebrating 225 years of God's faithfulness to Union Church. Our theme is simple— **"God is Here!"** Indeed, one constant throughout our long and storied history is God's faithful and life-giving presence here among us at Union in worship. Needless to say, because God is here, worship will forever be what Union Church is to be about.

The people of God are and have always been, by definition, a worshipping people. In fact, nothing is more characteristic of God's people in the Bible than the worship of God. Genesis declares that God created us to worship. Israel's life was formed around their life of worship. A good deal of the early part of the Bible is regulations about worship. It may be that King David's greatest contribution to Israel was his reform and renewal of worship. The prophets, one and all, speak of God regarding Israel's failure in worship.

The New Testament story begins with the angels singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Jesus declared that worship is a non-negotiable when he told the tempter, *"Worship the Lord your God and serve only him"* (Matthew 4:10). The early church ordered its life around worship. Every day, the Book of Acts records, the church met at the temple to praise God. St. Paul's letters are packed with imperatives that all point to the worship as the vocation of the church. The New Testament ends with St. John prostrate before the risen Christ who, then, gives his apostle a vision of heaven where saints and angels incessantly worship God in word and song. The church at its best, and quite often at its worst, has always known that worship is necessary and central. Simply put, worship is what the church does. We exist to glorify God!

Therefore, dear people of God, when you return from your necessary, and much deserved season of fun and refreshment this fall, and as we look forward to dedicating our new entryway, as well as celebrating 225 years of God's faithfulness to Union Church, make sure to bring with you a holy desire to worship the Lord with everything you've got. After all, God is here!

"God is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations."
— Psalm 100:5

Billy

August, 2019

~ THE HILLTOP HERALD IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE ON THE NEWS AND EVENTS PAGE OF THE UNION CHURCH WEBSITE ~
2019 PUBLICATIONS:

September 1st with all articles due by noon on August 27th • October 6th with all articles due by noon on October 1st



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

UNION YOUTH MINISTRY (UYM); Grades 6-12

Youth Bible Study (6th-12th grade)–Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00p.m. throughout the summer.

UYM Summer Events Schedule

- ◆ Sunday, July 28 [9a.m.—5p.m.] – Allegheny River Canoe Trip: Meet in the Union Church parking lot at 8:30a.m. Depart for Emlenton for the scheduled 11a.m. Canoe Trip. The Canoe Trip will take approximately 2.5 - 3 hours
- ◆ August 4-9, 2019 – Middle School Trip to Surf City: "a week long summer camp in Silver Lake, Michigan featuring a private beach, wave runners, horseback riding, loud energetic worship, and tons of other activities. Christian leaders and pastors come to share the love of Jesus with students and inspire them to change their communities". Open to middle school students (students entering 6th grade Fall 2019 through students who completed 8th grade spring 2019). You can check out more information here on the "Pittsburgh Kids Foundation" [website: <https://www.pkfcamps.org>]. The cost of the trip is \$440/student, financial aid is available, if needed. Please contact Kellyn von Arx if you are in need of financial aid for this trip. Final payment is due by July 28, 2019. Depart Union Church at 6a.m. August 4, 2019 and will return 9p.m. August 9, 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.

follow us:  [unionyouthministry](https://www.facebook.com/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 | tribar@outlook.com | 412.977.9454

NOTES FROM SESSION

Session continues to be grateful for the renovation work. Even after 100 years the church building continues to be a beautiful testimony to the blessings of the Lord. Visitors are impressed with the beauty of the sanctuary. For 225 years the congregations of Union have cared for this building. Such things as heating, a roof, a renewed sanctuary area, providing a fellowship hall, and of course painting and repairs that we do not see have been the work of the Trustees and members of Union. Now we are approaching the completion of some major work to provide a new entry way, an elevator, and air conditioning. We are truly blessed to worship in the Lord's house. The schedule of combined summer worship has given us opportunity to see friends who usually attend one service while we attend the alternative service during the fall thru spring. The air conditioning has made the sanctuary comfortable even on the hottest Sundays and we are thankful for good attendance.

Our church family celebrates in the baptism of six babies during May, June and July and the birth of two babies in July. The Lord called home two of our oldest members, Virginia Wagner on April 30, age 96; and Mary Gettemy on July 9, age 101. These two special women served the Lord here at Union Church for many years.

Western Region of Pittsburgh Presbytery will be meeting on Thursday, August 29 at Rennerdale Church at 6:30p.m. Dinner reservations are necessary. The discussion that evening is led by Rev. Dr. Leanna Fuller, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Let Sally Andrews know if you are interested in attending. Elders as well as interested congregation members are welcome.

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 Discipleship Committee-Winona Johnston
 Fellowship Committee-JoAnn Barker
 Finance Committee-Jeff Scott
 House Safety Team-Tim Jackson
 Nominating Committee-Mariann Bertocchi
 Outreach/Mission Team-Scott Davis
 Worship Committee-Tom MacLachlan

Submitted By: Sally Andrews, Elder

2019 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES*Future Plans for Our 2019 High School Graduates*

Alexa Bocek, a graduate of Lincoln Park School of Performing Arts will attend Roosevelt University in Chicago to study Journalism and Writing.

Deanne Bowman, a graduate of PA Cyber School will attend Community College of Allegheny County. Anthony Capp, a graduate of Moon High School will attend Clarion University to study Theater and Design Directions.

Vesta Daniels, a graduate of West Allegheny High School will attend Robert Morris University to study Nursing.

Kimberly Davis, a graduate of West Allegheny High School will attend University of Mt. Union to study Early Childhood Education.

Stefani Fotovich, a graduate of Montour High School will attend Allegheny College to study Environmental Sciences.

Gunnar Graham, a graduate of Montour High School will attend Chatham University to study History and Criminology.

Kylie Laughery, a graduate of West Allegheny High School will attend Carlow University to study Business Management and Human Resources with a certification in Sign Language.

Mackenzie Sox-Plannick, a graduate of Moon High School will attend Akron University to study Chemical Engineering.

Mackenzie Reed, a graduate of West Allegheny High School will attend Seton Hill University to study to be a Physicians Assistant.

Cindy Saffko, a graduate of Montour High School will attend Robert Morris University to study Nursing.

Lauren Trappazano, a graduate of Montour High School will be studying Cosmetology.

Luke Witner, a graduate of Montour High School will attend Pittsburgh Technical College to study Heating and Air Conditioning.

Zayne Wodzinski, a graduate of Montour High School enlisted in the U.S. Army. He is training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina.

Let's keep these young adults in our prayers as they begin their life pursuits.

Sue Shumek, Discipleship Committee

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE • REMEMBERING THE PAST

"The Presbyterian Church on the Hill" is celebrating 225 years of serving the Lord in the surrounding communities as well as reaching many parts of the world through mission work. In 1794 Union Presbyterian Church of Robinson Township was established by Scotch-Irish families in the area. Most of the families in the first church were farmers who were busy making provision for their families in a wilderness. Historical records are scarce but it is thought that the first worshippers met in the cemetery area probably seated on rough log benches with rifles at their sides in case of Indians. Around 1794 a building perhaps a log cabin was constructed. In 1832 a brick building was located on the present site at the top of the hill. This structure was partially demolished by a storm in December 1855. The third structure erected in 1856 was replaced by our current church building which was dedicated in 1901 free of debt. As you read the timeline of church structures you realize that our present main building and sanctuary are 118 years old. During this current renovation air conditioning has been installed as well as an elevator.

We are blessed to have had the opportunity to reach so many in this area with the message of salvation and the presentation of scripture lessons to children, youth, and adults. Our prayer is that the Lord will continue to use this building and those who worship here to teach the Gospel story to those who find this their church home in the future. Join us in celebrating our 225th anniversary on Sunday, September 8 at 10 a.m. when there will be a dedication of the new entry way, the rededication of the church building, and our lives to the Glory of God, through Jesus Christ. A reception will be held with the building open until 2 p.m. Plans are being made to publish an historical booklet later in the year to add to the comprehensive history which was printed in 1994.

Submitted by: Sally Andrews



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

*Bible study: last Tuesday of the month at 12:30p.m.
—all women are welcome! —*

Those of you with good memories may think this is last summer's article from PW. Some needs do not change. Last July we were reminded that if you are a member of the church and a female, you are a Presbyterian Woman of Union Church. Even though a year has passed our lives are still busy with family, volunteering in various groups, and a long list of things we need to do, plus a shorter list of what we would like to do. We would love you to add Presbyterian Women to your list. We welcome you to join our activities. We need your ideas and your participation. Take a minute to read Our Purpose [stated below] in this article and you will see, as I do, that you are living the purpose in the many ways you participate in church and in your everyday life. As the world changes it is difficult to discover just what type of "church" group you would feel comfortable becoming a part of.

Our monthly Bible Study on the last Tuesday of each month will begin on September, 24. Kathy Thomas has graciously agreed to be the Bible Study Leader. We meet at 12:30p.m. in the lounge. Another group of women (not PW but perhaps a cousin of our PW Bible study) meets to share and discuss a book at noon every Tuesday. This is not strictly scripture; but the books we discuss, and their authors, guide us to think about what our lives could and should be as Christians based on teachings from scripture. Watch the bulletin announcements for the Lunch, Learn, and Laugh schedule.

Please mark October 13 as Thank Offering Sunday. Each year Presbyterian Women throughout the country participate in a special offering which is designated for national and international mission projects. We will have guest minister Rev. Dr. Sheldon Sorge, General Minister to Pittsburgh Presbytery bring the message that Sunday. The women of our congregation will be part of that Sunday's worship services. Please take this opportunity to read scripture, help with announcements, receive the offering, or lead in some part of the worship service.

Presbyterian Women thank the congregation for supporting our Birthday Offering Mission. We were able to donate \$345 to help support mission work.

Submitted By: Sally Andrews

OUR PURPOSE
Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered
By the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves:
to nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study,
to support the mission of the church worldwide,
to work for justice and peace and
to build an inclusive, caring community of women
that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (USA)
and witnesses to the promise of God's Kingdom.

UNION GOLF LEAGUE

The Union Golf League at Moon Golf Club has moved to Monday at 5:12p.m. (weather permitting). Everyone is welcome! Contact: Scott [scott.antonine@gmail.com]



OUTREACH-MISSION INFORMATION

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

Shining the Light of Christian Hospitality

Let love be genuine...Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Romans 12:9a, 13

Our seventeen-member mission team to the John and Vera Mae Perkins Foundation returned with countless stories and insights to share with our church families at Union and Mt. Pisgah. The JVMPF packed our week full with work projects (ranging from finishing and laying flooring, painting, and fence building, to upholstering and helping with the children's summer camp), study time with Dr. John Perkins (alone worth the 16 hour ride!), civil rights history (a tour of rural Mendenhall where John and Vera Mae labored in the 60s, and the brand new Mississippi Civil Rights Museum), and plenty of deep south hospitality. We left Jackson having made new friendships with brothers and sisters in Christ who serve the Gospel in a context different from ours up north. I believe I speak for the team in saying that their friendship and model of ministry both encourages and strengthens our sense of God's calling in our lives.

Of the many Biblical themes that stick in my mind from our week at the JVMPF, the passage alluded to above comes to the fore. In this 12th chapter of Romans, Paul describes the fruit born of those who have received the Lord's gracious work of salvation in Jesus Christ. He explicitly uses the word "hospitality" in this passage to encourage generosity, not only to those who are part of the community, the "saints," but the stranger as well. In addition to the explicit mention of hospitality, Paul's overall tone in this passage is one of welcome, grace, forbearance and generosity, even to one's enemy. John, Vera Mae, and their children gave first-hand testimony to this fruit born in the crucible of the civil rights struggle, and active right up to the present day.

Paul's words above direct the church of Jesus Christ with regard to attitude and behavior we must exhibit toward all, if we are indeed going to bear the fruit of grace and mercy that we have received through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ – a sacrifice by which he has received us, once enemies and rebels, as friends! In the volatile climate of hate and inhospitable language and actions that characterizes the public square in the U.S., the people of Jesus Christ ought to lead the way embodying an alternative way – the way of the Gospel – in word and in deed. As the body of Christ, we ought to exemplify a profound hospitality, and we ought to demand it of our political leaders. As the church did throughout the civil rights era, so the church today ought to stand for the welfare and protection of all – citizen and stranger alike, and particularly those who are most vulnerable in our midst.

The team will look forward to sharing more stories and insights in the weeks to come. Sunday, August 18th, will feature a special focus on the trip at worship and in fellowship hall following. Please join us then! On behalf of the team, thank you for all your prayers and support.

Peace...Tom

CHILDCARE CENTER NEWS

Union Church Childcare is halfway through our summer camp program. Bike day has been a huge success and some of the students are officially riding without training wheels - huge accomplishment! Nzone Sports has been coming every Wednesday and the students are progressing in their soccer skills each week. The toddlers have been loving Gymagic bus and look forward to it every week. The Carnegie Science Center is visiting to complete a "Science on the Road" presentation. The summer months have been hot, but SO MUCH FUN! To stay cool, one of our school age parents is treating the students to a visit from the Kona ice truck next week!

Kelsey Liwosz, Director | 412.787.7553 phone | 412.787.8126 fax | childcare@unionpresbychurch.org

DiscipleSHIP Children's Ministries

The DiscipleSHIP Team is planning several changes to our children and youth ministry that are to be in place for this fall. These changes will help us to serve our families and the children of Union Church and fulfill our mission to make disciples of even our youngest community members! Here is a summary of some of the changes that we will be introducing Sunday, September 15, 2019:

1. All families will enter through the Sanctuary main entrance and sign-in with KidCheck.
2. All children (except for infants going to the nursery) will join families at the start of worship in both services.
3. Children participating in DiscipleSHIP will be dismissed to do so at the call for the offering; the children will be shepherded to their classrooms by designated assistants from each of the classrooms (and/or parents if they would like to do so).
4. The classroom breakdown during the early service will be as follows: nursery (infant—age 3); Pre-K (ages 3-5); K-2nd grade; 3rd-5th grade (partial break-out weekly, from the larger group of K-5th).
5. The classroom offering for the second service will utilize Young Children in Worship – so the curriculum will not be duplicated by the second service experience; the age break-out during the second service will be for children ages 3–2nd grade. Children 3rd-5th grade will remain in worship.
6. Communion Sunday—all 4th and 5th grade students will remain in worship.

We plan to accomplish the following objectives through these changes:

- Provide a consistent nurture of our children/ministry to our families at both services
- Introduce children to the larger, cross-generational worship life of the congregation
- Address appropriate developmental needs of children
- Increase the opportunities for Union members to use their gifts in response to the call we all share every time we baptize an infant or young child!

Please consider how you might participate with other servant-leaders who have a heart for children (infant thru grade 5) and youth (grades 6 - 12) in our congregation. We are putting together a flexible structure that can accommodate a variety of gifts, interests, and availability. Consider as many (or few) roles as your time may allow!
House Safety Team: anyone over the age of 18 serving in our children's ministry must have childcare clearances and background checks on file in the Union Church Office. Any DiscipleSHIP leader will be more than happy to assist you.

We invite each Union member to prayerfully consider the possibility that the Lord is calling you to some aspect of our ministry to children and youth. (In addition to regular Sunday nurture opportunities, you may also consider the Lord's call to serve with Summer J.A.M., and seasonal ministry events like the Easter Egg Hunt and Trunk-or-Treat; or ministry with Jr. and Sr. High youth on Sunday evenings and Wednesday evenings.) We are excited for the new look to our DiscipleSHIP Ministry this fall. Please keep the DiscipleSHIP Committee in prayer as preparations are made for the newly shaped ministry.

We appreciate your prayers for our ministry to children and youth in this coming season!
The DiscipleSHIP Committee

DiscipleSHIP Children's Ministries, cont.

10a.m. Combined One-worship Service with Nursery Care*

» **Nursery Care (infants—age 3)*** Children will be cared for by gentle, loving, compassionate hands while you attend the worship service.

*All children MUST sign in at KidCheck on the 1st floor of Christian Education Building.

DiscipleSHIP Children's Ministry Summer-in-Worship Opportunity:

» **Ages 3-5 years**—age appropriate worship bag *

» **K-2nd grade**—age appropriate worship bag *

» **Grades 3-5**—sermon notes/'Connection' clipboard to follow along in the worship service *

* We ask that you take the age-appropriate bag/clipboard for your child and at the end of the service simply return all items within the bag to the same area in which you found it.

DiscipleSHIP Children's Ministry Contacts:

* Winona Johnston, Discipleship Children's Ministries Coordinator | winonaj@verizon.net | 412.498.2927

* Rev. Tom Ribar, Associate Pastor of Youth & Families | tbribar@outlook.com | 412.977.9454



Sunday, October 27

4:00-6:00p.m.

An event for children (birth thru 5th grade) & Family!

What is it? A Trunk-or-Treat opportunity for kids and a treat giving opportunity for adults. It allows us to gather as a community and provide a safe and secure Halloween environment for children. Kids go trick or treating "station to station"; while adults pass out treats from their station inside the Christian Education Building.

What do we need? Kids (birth to 5th grade) to come and "Trunk-or-Treat". Adults come with decorations for your station and bags of candy to pass out. Make it fun and wear a costume...enjoy!

* All stations need set-up and ready to "treat" by 4p.m.

* In addition to Trunk-or-Treat, refreshments, face painting, and games will be available.

Mark your calendar . . .

Don't miss this fabulous fall event!

