

Discipleship Connect Hour For All Ages

Greetings Union Church Family!

I don't know about you, but for Tami and I, our family has flourished best when we have established healthy rhythms for our life together; when our daily and weekly and monthly patterns served the deepest needs for our family. I think it is the same for any church family. Our health as the family of God at Union is dependent upon establishing the daily and weekly and monthly routines that serve our needs to worship and grow in understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Billy and I, along with the rest of the staff, are excited to re-establish some rhythms to our life together that have been sorely missed over the course of these past eighteen months and more! This all starts with the return to two worship times that better serve the needs of our church family. Next in importance is reclaiming the rhythms for growth and learning. To this end, we are inviting you to welcome a new format for nurture and fellowship for all ages on Sunday mornings.

Let's start with fellowship. On Sundays, from 8:45 a.m. until after the conclusion of the 11 a.m. worship hour, around 12:15, you may gather in Fellowship Hall (see how aptly named it is!) for coffee, tea, or juice, and on that occasional Sunday, donuts! This is when you can catch up with friends and make connections with people who worship at a different time than you (yes, 9 a.m. folks, you can stay around afterwards, and 11 a.m. folks, you can come early!). Nursery care for infants and toddlers (up to age 3) is available for these hours, 8:45 a.m. – 12:00 noon.

The Fellowship time will be woven through the morning. The time for nurture and learning, will happen in between the two worship times. We are calling this time the Discipleship Connect Hour. It will be a time of nurture and learning for all ages. Children, Pre-K-5th Grade, will begin their Discipleship Connect Hour at 9:30 a.m. Children of families who worship at the 9 a.m. service will be dismissed during the Offering and shepherded down to their classrooms by a teacher. Children of families who worship at 11 a.m. should arrive by 9:20, sign-in with Kid Check in Fellowship Hall, and join the other children from the 9 a.m. worship as they head down to their classrooms. These parents/caregivers may then enjoy a cup of coffee and time to relax until the adult Discipleship Connect Hour begins.

Children will be shepherded back to Fellowship Hall around 10:30, and supervised there, with snacks, until parents can pick them up at the conclusion of the adult Discipleship Connect Hour at 10:45. On occasion, children may be shepherded by their teachers to the sanctuary at 10:30 for a time of music-making, and then shepherded back to Fellowship Hall when finished.

Adult and Youth Discipleship Connect Hour will begin at the conclusion of the early worship service, around 10 a.m. After grabbing a refreshment, adults will meet for respective studies from 10-10:45 a.m. At the present, the only adult offering on the schedule is an offering for the parents/caregivers of children participating in the Discipleship Connect Hour. This parent/caregiver offering will provide Biblical study material that will coincide with the lesson that the children are learning that same week. This will include some suggestions about how to carry that week's lesson over into the week ahead. We are excited about the resources this curriculum provides for families so that learning and nurture may be part of the weekly rhythm beyond Sunday morning.

We intend to expand the offerings for adults and youth in the months ahead. Please feel welcome to contact me if you sense that the Lord is prompting you to lead a Bible study or Prayer Group. Even if you sense a call to lead, but don't know where to begin, we have some resources that are ready for facilitation with minimal "expertise" needed. In other words, one doesn't have to be a Biblical scholar to lead an effective Bible study or facilitate a video-based study!

Please mark September 19th on your calendar as the start to this new rhythm in your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ! Join us for worship, fellowship, and nurture, and let's see how the Lord's Spirit will use the patterns of our Union family life for his Kingdom and glory!

Peace,
Tom Ribar - Associate Pastor



Important Information Regarding Fall Kickoff

Union Church Family,

Wow! Fall is here and preparation for the new ministry season continues full-steam ahead. We are truly excited to welcome you back and to kick off the new ministry year together.

Our tentative worship schedule is as follows:

September 5th at 11:00am: Indoor worship in the Sanctuary.

September 12th at 11:00am: Rally Day Sunday! Outdoor, parking lot worship (last one of the season, weather permitting) with food, Bruster's ice cream.

September 19th: Kick-Off Sunday!

9-10am: Contemporary Worship in the Sanctuary.

9:30-10:45am: Children's "Discipleship Connect Hour" in CE building. (Children will be dismissed during the offering and led to their classroom)

10:00-10:45am: Adult "Discipleship Connect Hour" - Gathering for Parents and Caregivers of Children in the CE lounge; Other Adult offerings and locations TBA.

11:00-12:00pm: Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary.

8:45am-12:15pm: Nursery care and coffee fellowship will be provided all morning.

Next, due to the amazing generosity of an anonymous giver (and the availability of a quality contractor) we are moving forward with plans to repair and paint the sanctuary throughout the month of October. Because of the extensive scaffolding work required to complete the project we will have to endure some minor inconvenience. But hey! If we have learned anything over the past year and a half, inconvenience is an enduring fact of life.

Finally, the leadership is well aware that COVID cases are on the uptick in several parts of the country. If those numbers should continue to increase in our community we may need to change and/or alter any of the plans above. Know that we will take any reasonable steps to limit the disease, just as we have done throughout the pandemic. However, that said, we are moving full-steam ahead with our fall ministry plans! We are not in the same situation as March 2020, without preventive and other measures to help. Right now, the risks are not as significant as they were before, and our community needs the good news of Jesus Christ more than ever. There is more to health than the absence of disease. There is emotional, spiritual health that requires our being together. So, let us move forward together this fall as a worshipping, loving and mobilizing people of God's grace!

With anticipation in Christ,
Billy

Opportunities to Serve This Fall

Usher Team Ministry

Join this ministry that helps guests and members experience the joy of worshipping God. Ushers create a great hospitality experience by helping people find a seat if needed, and making the service run smoothly by passing collection plates, taking attendance and more. If you are interested speak to or email Tom MacLachlan at thomas.maclachlan@pnc.com

The Welcome Team

Union desires to foster a warm, friendly, hospitable environment that surprises skeptics, eases the unchurched, and empowers members. Join the Welcome Team and help us! It's fun and easy, say hello, exude warmth and friendliness. As Christ has welcomed you, so welcome one another. For more information contact Anne Burke at aburke3503@gmail.com

Coffee Fellowship Team

Coffee, tea and snacks are an essential component of Sunday morning church life and community. Join the Coffee Fellowship Team and help provide for this much needed ministry. Tasks include setting up, cleaning up and just providing help where needed. If you feel called to serve, speak to or email Joann Barker jobarker59@comcast.net

Live-Stream Team

As we move to two worship services, we would like to expand our Live-Stream Team that takes care of operating the camera and the streaming box. The technology is pretty simple and easy to use. If you are the least bit tech savvy, this could be a good fit for you. We plan to put together a rotation so that team members would be responsible for one or two Sundays a month. If you are interested speak to or email Pastor Tom at tbribar@outlook.com

The Nursery Team

Our new format for worship and the Discipleship Connect Hour will require expanded hours for our nursery care for infants and toddlers. We encourage parents and grandparents to consider signing up for one Sunday a quarter to help in the nursery. (Of course you don't have to be a parent or grandparent to help out! All adults are welcome!) The nursery will always have one paid staff who will "be in charge." Adults who sign up to serve will act as helpers, so there is no need for extensive knowledge of the nursery procedures or special clearances. Just an affinity for holding babies, changing diapers, and loving the children of our Union Family! If you are interested speak to or email Pastor Tom at tbribar@outlook.com

The Praise Team

The Praise Team is looking for individuals who would like to play either piano or bass guitar during our contemporary worship services. If you are interested, speak or email Anthony Calvario at anthonycalvario@gmail.com

Notes From The Choir

"Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth."

The choir is planning to resume its ministry of music to our Lord, beginning rehearsal on Thursday, September 2nd, 7 - 8 pm. Our first Sunday worship is September 19th. Rehearsals for Sunday mornings begins at 10:15 am.

The following is the list of rehearsals for the next couple of weeks:

September 2: Rehearsal: 7:00-8:00 pm
September 9: Rehearsal: 7:00-8:00 pm
September 16: Rehearsal: 7:00-8:00 pm
September 19: Rehearsal (10:15 am); Service (11:00 am)
September 23: Rehearsal: 7:00-8:30 pm
September 26: Rehearsal (10:15 am); Service (11:00 am)
September 30: Rehearsal: 7:00-8:30 pm
October 3: Rehearsal (10:15 am); Service (11:00 am)

Due to the continuing virus threat, the following are responses to frequently asked questions concerning safety guidelines:

- 1. When will we use Masks?** We will use masks when we are not performing (i.e., when you are speaking). If you are singing, we will employ the social distancing requirement (i.e. minimum three feet).
- 2. How will we manage rehearsals/Sunday services?** I am requesting that ALL Choir members attend rehearsals on Thursday evenings. We will use a larger space to maintain social distancing requirements during rehearsals. However, due to the social distancing requirement and a smaller performance space (i.e., the Choir loft), we will have to rotate singers on Sunday mornings. Please attend rehearsal and we will discuss the rotation schedule.
- 3. What are your specific suggestions for hygiene?** Please follow the guidelines on the attached PDF for hand washing, hand sanitizer, and clean surfaces for all music making activities.

If you have a love of singing to the Lord (not necessarily able to read music), we would LOVE to have you as part of our choir family!! Please contact John Seybert, choir director, at jseybert23@gmail.com or (863) 838-8441, or any choir member.

Praise Team

Hello fellow brothers and sisters in Christ!

The praise team is truly looking forward to this upcoming year once again. There is something very sacred and beautiful for the body of Christ joining together to sing praises to our Lord. The Spirit can move us in powerful ways during communal worship. We pray that our songs together can move our hearts towards Christ. We pray our songs together will help us turn towards the one who saves, even in the midst of fear, anxiety, sadness and doubt. May we lift our voices loud as one body to Christ!

Peace,
The Praise Team

Quilters Putting Down Their Needles

In 1984 a group of Union Church women got together to make quilts. They met on Thursdays in the bride's room and became known as the Union Church Quilters. Many of these women are no longer with us, but as of today we still have four active quilters and two inactive quilters. Because of the pandemic of 2020/2021 we have been unable to continue quilting. Hand quilting has become a lost art and many people want quicker results, therefore, we have given up quilting. The group has donated to many projects throughout the Church over the years. We will miss our Tuesday fellowship and the many people who visited us.

Mission From Your Armchair

Do you want to do mission work but can't spend a week in Central America or Alaska? Not handy with a hammer, only have a few minutes a day, watch much TV? Try knitting or crocheting!

Since 2001 a small group of women and a few men have created 4,234 knit and crocheted baby blankets. They were given to new babies in the congregation, new babies in the child care infant room, and thousands have been donated to Magee Women's Hospital for new babies in need.

The group originated with church stalwarts Virginia Wagner and Lorraine Shaffer, who met in the lounge for fellowship and creation. We carry on with Lorraine Shaffer, Lil Jonnet, Louise Baroni, Marg Cue, Rose Kerfoot, Mary Kay Glass, Nancy English, and Ellen Jukes.

Yarn, needles and hooks, patterns, hints, teaching, and fun are all part of the project. Every first and third Monday from 9:30-11ish we meet in the church lounge. Questions? Call Lorraine at 412.452.0297 or Ellen at 724.601.6268. If you can't join us in person you can knit or crochet where ever you are and drop off your finished blankets to one of our members or in the church office. What a great way to serve the Lord!

Presbyterian Women News

Union Presbyterian Women are part of the Pittsburgh Presbyterian Women which includes Women's groups from Presbyterian Churches throughout Allegheny County. Our church has been involved in ministry through these churches for many years. Each year the Presbyterian women work together to support a mission project. You may remember when we made dresses for African girls or the year we knit small bears and made blankets for a children's shelter here in Pittsburgh. Presbyterian Women in our synod also identify a mission to support financially. As we dealt with the COVID virus the women continued to contribute to missions, locally and internationally. Presbyterian Women in the Pittsburgh Presbytery will meet here at Union on November 13th for their Fall Gathering where officers are elected, business conducted and worship celebrated. We are very excited to host this meeting and lunch. Watch for details near to the date and we may ask for you to help with this opportunity to host PWPP.

Your Deacons Are Here For You!

Your Deacons wanted to remind you we are here for you! Below are just a few of the things we can offer our congregation and local communities. Please keep in mind you can make a request for yourself or make an anonymous request for someone you know in need. Just call the church office or one of the Deacons.

1. Prayer requests for yourself, family and friends
2. Phone calls (and when able visits) to home bound or ill
3. Food pantry boxes (every second Tuesday of the month from 6-7pm), however boxes can be provided at any time needed.
4. Gift cards available in a variety of amounts
5. Emergency funding available for needs such as rent, utilities and medical bills
6. A list of local and state resources and programs for assistance

Want to assist the Deacon's ministry programs? Here are a couple of ways you can help us: Donations of cash or gift cards; Donations for our Food Pantry (items can be dropped in the designated collection baskets located in Fellowship Hall)

Currently we are need of peanut butter, jelly, canned tuna, cream soups, condiments, taco kits, jars of salsa and pasta sauces. As always we could use cleaning products and toilet paper.

We look forward to assisting you wherever we can.

Please contact the church office or Deacon moderator Tracy Strobel with any questions. 724-719-8671

Your Deacons:

Carole MacLachlan	Karen Connell	Bobbie Giles
Nancy McGilvray	Simikka Davis	Sally Lickovich
Bob Weber	JoAnn Sanders	Michelle Smith
Sue Shumek	Tracy Strobel	

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