

# Union News

## November 2025



Dear Friends and Covenant Partners (members) of Union Community Church,

A couple things have been tumbling around in my mind the last couple weeks. Did you know that October 26 was Reformation Sunday? It is a time on the church calendar to reflect on the how the Protestant Reformation transformed Christianity for both Protestants and Catholics alike. I've been thinking about the rally cries of the Reformation: that salvation is accomplished by **grace alone**, through **faith alone**, in **Christ alone**, according to **Scripture alone**, all for the **glory of God alone**.

I've also been thinking about Union's 175th Anniversary. A lot of work has been done by a lot of different hands to try and make this upcoming event a success. It's not hard to see the connections between Reformation Sunday and Union's 175th. Both have us look back at the long history of the church. It is also not hard to see how Union has tried to remain faithful to the same 5 principles of the Reformation over much of it's 175 years.

It's also almost Thanksgiving. As I've mentioned before, my family's main Thanksgiving traditions are to watch the Macy's Parade and have each person request one course of the dinner we eat on that day. I've picked Waldorf Salad the last couple of years... but I've been thinking about doing something a little crazy this year!

With Thanksgiving, Union's 175th, and the Protestant Reformation all bouncing around in my head, I ended up taking some time looking exploring what some of the leaders of the Protestant Reformation had to say about being thankful. I've found it helpful to incorporate some of their prayers in my own this last month. Maybe this November, some of their prayers of thanksgiving might also touch your heart in a similar way.

### We Thank You for All Your Benefits

Veit Dietrich, Lutheran Protestant Reformer, 1509-1549

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank you for all your benefits. You have given us body and life and have graciously sustained us to this day. Do not take your blessing from us. Preserve us from greed, that we may serve you only, love you and abide in you and not defile ourselves by idolatrous love of wealth or goods, but hope and trust only in your grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever. Amen.

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### November Elders

Tim Grigg  
Eric Nelson  
Lyn Wollenberg

Communion  
November 2

Stated Session  
November 16

*Continued from front page*

### **Prayer Before a Meal**

John Calvin, French Protestant Reformer, 1509-1564

All look unto you, O Lord; and you give them their meat in due season; that you give them they gather: you open your hand, and they are filled with all things in abundance (Ps. 104:27).

O Lord, in whom is the source and inexhaustible fountain of all good things, pour out your blessing upon us, and sanctify to our use the meat and drink which are the gifts of your kindness toward us, that we, using them soberly and frugally as you enjoin, may eat with a pure conscience.

Grant, also, that we may always both with true heartfelt gratitude acknowledge, and with our lips proclaim, you our Father and the giver of all that is good, and, while enjoying bodily nourishment, aspire with special longing of heart after the bread of your doctrine, by which our souls may be nourished in the hope of eternal life, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

### **Prayer to Be Said before You Begin Your Work**

John Knox, Presbyterian Protestant Reformer, 1514-1572

O Lord God, most merciful Father and Savior, seeing that it pleases you to command us to labor in order to relieve our needs, we ask you by your grace to bless our labor today. Without your blessing extended unto us, we would not be able to continue. May this favor serve as a witness to us of your bountifulness and assistance so that we may better understand the fatherly care you have for us.

Moreover, O Lord, we ask that you strengthen us with your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully toil in our work without fraud or deceit, and that we may endeavor ourselves to follow your will rather than to seek to satisfy our own greedy affections or desire for gain. And if it please you, O Lord, to prosper us through our labor, give us a mind also to help those in need according to the ability in which you gave to us in your mercy. And knowing that all good things come of you, grant that we may humble ourselves to our neighbors and not lift ourselves up above them if they have not received so liberal a portion of your mercy as you have given us.

And if it pleases you to challenge us through greater poverty than we would desire, Lord, grant us the grace to know that you will continue to nourish us through Your bounty. Help us to not be tempted to distrust your care, but patiently wait for you to fill us. We ask this not only for our physical needs but chiefly with your heavenly and spiritual treasures, so that we may always have ample reason to give you thanks and to wholly rest on Your mercies. Hear us, O Lord of mercy, through Jesus Christ Your Son, our Lord. Amen.

Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor James

## **PRAYER FOR THE COMMUNITY & WORLD**

We hope that you will take a little extra time to check out the second to last page of our newsletter. Each month, we plan to have some very specific things listed about our church's mission commitments (both local and global) and about some ministries that other ECO churches in North Carolina are undertaking! We hope that you might include these in your own prayers during the month.

## WORSHIP FOR NOVEMBER

During the month of the November there is something for everyone on each Sunday!

### **-All Saint's Day/ Dedication Sunday- November 2**

On November 2, we will take time in worship to honor those important to our faith formation who are no longer with us. It is also a Sunday to dedicate pledge cards and participate in a special Flourishing Recommitment & Dedication Service.

### **-175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Special Service & Lunch- November 9**

Join us for our special 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Service and Lunch!

### **-Festival of Scripture and Song- November 16 & 23**

This year we will be celebrating Christ the King Sunday for 2 Sundays in a row. We will take time in worship to explore Scriptures that demonstrate why Christ is truly King and sing a bunch of our favorite songs!

### **-First Sunday of Advent- November 30**

### **Sermon Series: "Looking Forward, Back, & All Around"**

October 19- Luke 18: 9-17, "Providing for the Future... Growing in Discipleship"

October 26- John 8, 25-36, "Serving in the Present... Bringing the Gospel with Us"

-Reformation Sunday

November 2- Ephesians 1: 11-23, "Honoring the Past... Learning from Others"

-All Saints Day; Celebration of the Lord's Supper; Daylight Savings End

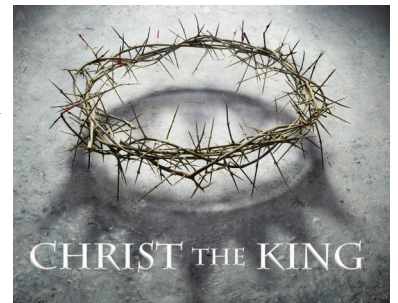
### **November 9- 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

### **Sermon Series: Christ is King: Festival of Scripture and Song**

November 16- Festival of Scripture and Song, "Christ is King: The Lord is on His Throne"

November 23- Festival of Scripture and Song, "Christ is King: Let all the Earth Praise"

-Christ the King Sunday



### **Advent Sermon Series: A Savior Made Known**

November 30- Luke 1: 26-38, "A Savior Made Known... Gabriel Announces"

-First Sunday of Advent

## STEWARDSHIP

November 2 is Stewardship Dedication Sunday. As part of the service, covenant partners and church friends will be encouraged to turn in pledge cards. These cards are not binding contracts; surprise life events do happen and financial situations often change during the year. However, these cards do help Session plan the budget for the following year. If you miss dedication Sunday, we invite you to turn in your pledge card either into the offering plate or the main office as soon as you can! Thank You!!



## VETERANS DAY PRAYER SERVICE

Union has a new opportunity this month. This last year, the cemetery committee (with help from the men of the church) have put up a flag in our cemetery to honor our veterans. Also, because of the 175<sup>th</sup>, Gary McGinnis and Kathy Kytle have both gathered the information they have (though probably still not complete) about the veterans of Union. Veterans Day is a day set aside to remember those both living and dead who have served our country. We invite you to join us at the **Veterans Flag pole** in Union's Cemetery, on **Veterans Day, November 11, at 4PM**, as we take time to remember and pray for those who have served our county and their families.



## THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Our joint Thanksgiving Service with Sandy Plains this year will be at **Sandy Plains** on **November 23 at 5PM**. What a wonderful way to express our gratitude to God before Thanksgiving!

## ANGEL TREE

Be on the lookout for the **Angel Tree** that will go up this **November**! This year our Angel Tree will be helping **Least of These**. The plan is to have on the tree both (a) specific foster children who can be helped with Christmas gifts this December and (b) specific items that can be purchased for Least of These to provide gifts to cover last minute needs that pop up. We hope that you will be able to participate in this important ministry this holiday season!



## UNION ENSEMBLE PRACTICES

The Union Ensemble will practice right after worship this month on **November 2<sup>nd</sup>** and after the youth fundraiser lunch on the **16<sup>th</sup>**! Hope you can be there!!

## 175<sup>th</sup> CELEBRATION THIS MONTH

### HISTORICAL/DEDICATION CELEBRATION- SAT., NOV. 8, 10AM-12PM

On Saturday, November 8, join us for a special Historical and Dedication Celebration from 10AM-12PM.

It will include:

- A presentation of some of the history of Union Church
- A dedication for the church's foundation stone
- Tours of the cemetery.

### SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICE & CATERED LUNCH- SUN., NOV. 9, 10AM

On November 9, we will have a special worship service at 10AM followed by a catered lunch. Please try to park in the back of the church or across the street at the library and ballfield if possible to provide space in the main parking lot for guests.

This event will include:

- Special visitors from Union's Past at the service
- Historical items on display
- A special time of fellowship during lunch



## CHECK OUT THE NEW TREE PAINTING

This month we hope that you will take time to check out the new painting that has been added to the main hallway outside the Sanctuary. Session would like to thank Claire Cabral for its addition. It looks amazing!!

The painting is a picture of a tree that represents where we are moving as a congregation for the next 3 years. We seek to be church that is:

**-Growing at our Roots thru Mentorship-** we hope to become a church where everyone in the congregation is serving as a mentor: whether they are passing along their skills and talents to others, coming alongside people new to Union, or sharing Christ in the community.

**-Growing at our Trunk by Branching out into the Community-** we hope to build new connections with the families at Bess, Forestview, the Homeschool at Union, the library, and a few neighborhoods nearby.

**-Growing with our leaves by Nourishing ourselves through renewed Discipleship-** We hope to provide new opportunities for people to try out new spiritual disciplines, grow our music ministry program, and start new disciple groups.



## BOOK CHICKS

Join us monthly during our Book Chicks book club meetings for some food, fun, and fellowship! For more information or to find out what book we are reading, please reach out to Kim Morrison. Our next meeting is **Monday, November 17th, at 6:30 PM.**

## BINGO

Our next event is **November 20 at 3 PM.** This monthly outreach touches the lives of many at **Terrace Ridge Assisted Living.** We always need people able to help those in the residence who have limitations with their eyesight, hearing loss, or fine motor issues! Consider joining the ministry this year!



## HAPPY YEARS

Happy Years will meet on **Wednesday, November 19th at 12 PM** in the Fellowship Hall! Everyone is invited to attend!

## SOUL SISTERS SMALL GROUP

The **Soul Sisters Small Group** will meet on **Monday, November 3rd at 7 PM.** Come and enjoy a fun evening of Bible study, refreshments, and fellowship. If you don't already attend, we would love to have you join us.

## GOLDEN GIRLS CIRCLE

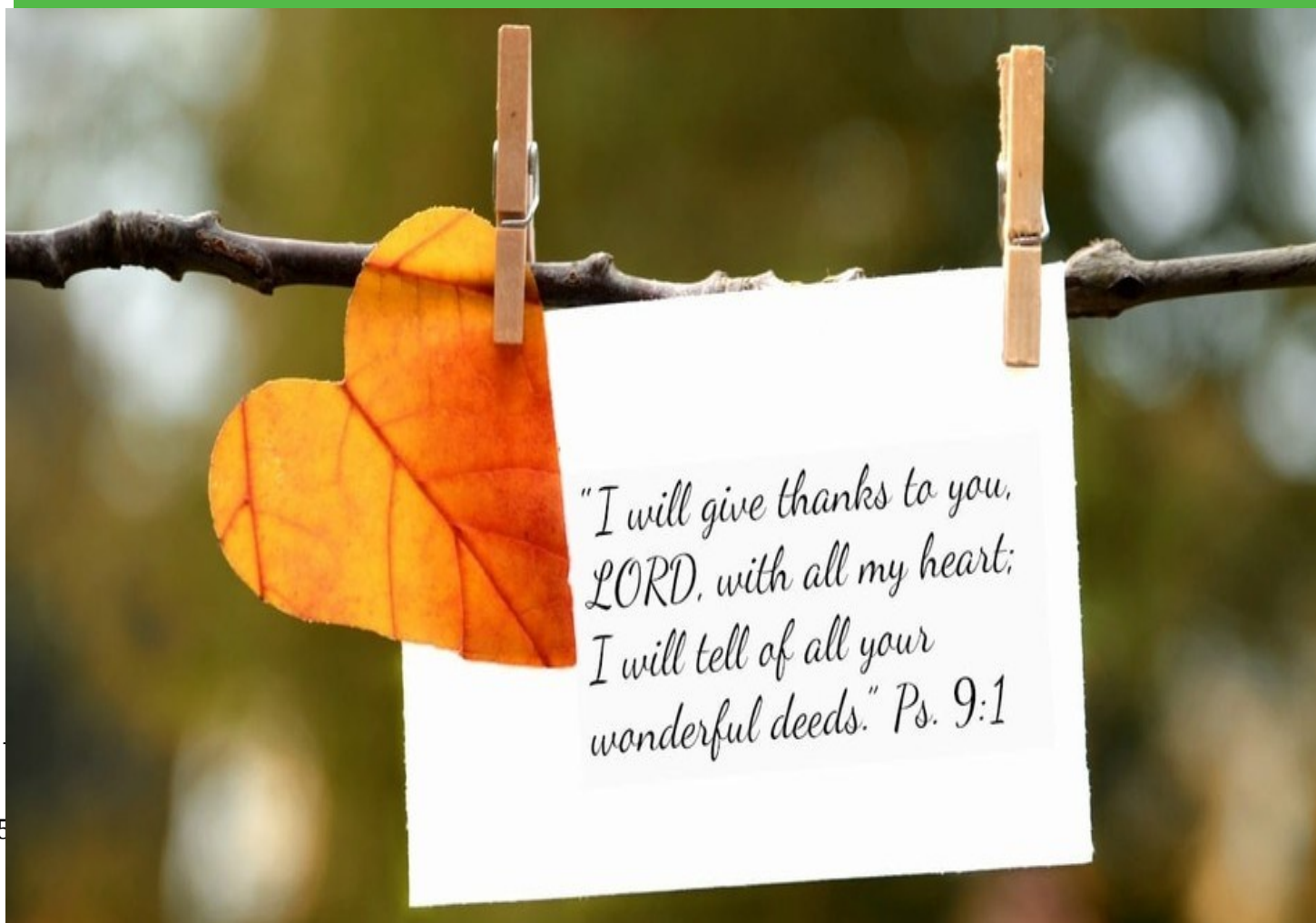
The **Golden Girls Circle** will meet on **Monday, November 3rd at 11 AM.** Please consider joining us if you don't attend a women's circle.

## PRAYER AFTER WORSHIP

Join us on **Sunday, November 23** for a special prayer service after worship in the prayer room across from the sanctuary. We will pray for those struggling with grief, health concerns, and thank God for the many blessings in our lives.

## 5 CENTS A MEAL

Our next 5 Cents a meal offering will be on **Sunday, November 2nd during worship.** The money collected will go to support CAM.



## PRAYERS NEAR AND FAR

### Prayers for ECO Churches in the Presbytery of North Carolina

**(1) Franklin Presbyterian Church, Salisbury...** Please keep in prayer the Meals on wheels program—serving the shut-ins of the region. Franklin is also involved in Operation Christmas Child and National Collection Week is November 17-24.

**(2) Hope Community Church, Wilmington...** Hope Church recently began worshipping in a new location. Let us pray that it might become a holy space for them. Hope is also in partnership with Pastor Earl and the Nicaragua Verbo Christian Church (dedicated to advancing the Gospel and restoring hope to the people of Nicaragua).

**(3) Huntersville Presbyterian Church, Huntersville—** Please be in prayer of Huntersville's Pickleball program. They also began a new program in September thru MomCo, providing Christian fellowship and Bible Study for moms in the community.

### Prayers for Unreached People Groups

In partnership with the other ECO churches in our Presbytery, we have begun praying for unreached people groups each Sunday in worship. During the month of October we prayed for the Dhobi Mathuria, Mathing, Thandan, Dolapati, Mer, Tili, Dudekula Mimi, Amdang, and Tondi Songway people. Let us continue to pray for these groups thru the month of November. Consider praying for new "missionaries" to be called by God to share Christ in these places, for greater access into the lives of these people groups, and for receptive hearts.



### Those impacted by Hurricane Melissa

Please pray for those affected in Caribbean by Hurricane Melissa.



| SUN                                                                                        | MON                                                                                 | TUE                                                              | WED                               | THU                                                   | FRI       | SAT                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Sundays</b><br>9 AM<br>Sunday School<br>10 AM                                           |                                                                                     |                                                                  |                                   |                                                       |           | 1                              |
| <b>2</b> 10 AM<br>Dedication<br>11 AM<br>Ensemble<br>2:30 PM<br>SOC & W & S                | <b>3</b> 11 AM<br>Golden Girls<br>7 PM<br>Soul Sisters<br>7 PM<br>Men's Bible Study | <b>4</b> 10 AM<br>Bible Study<br>7 PM<br>B&G                     | <b>5</b>                          | <b>6</b>                                              | <b>7</b>  | <b>8</b><br>175<br>Celebration |
| <b>9</b> 11 AM<br>175<br>Celebration                                                       | <b>10</b><br>7 PM<br>Men's Bible Study                                              | <b>11</b> 10 AM<br>Bible Study<br>4 PM<br>Veterans<br>Day Prayer | <b>12</b><br>5:30 PM<br>MOC       | <b>13</b>                                             | <b>14</b> | <b>15</b>                      |
| <b>16</b> 11 AM<br>Youth<br>Luncheon<br>-Ensemble<br>2:30 PM<br>Session Meeting            | <b>17</b> 6:30 PM<br>Book Chicks<br>7 PM<br>Men's Bible Study                       | <b>18</b> 10 AM<br>Bible Study                                   | <b>19</b> 12 PM<br>Happy<br>Years | <b>20</b> 3 PM<br>Bingo<br>6 PM<br>Women's<br>Council | <b>21</b> | <b>22</b>                      |
| <b>23</b> 11 AM<br>Prayer after<br>Worship<br>11:45 W&C<br>5 PM<br>Thanksgiving<br>Service | <b>24</b> 7 PM<br>Men's Bible Study                                                 | <b>25</b> 10 AM<br>Bible Study                                   | <b>26</b>                         | <b>27</b>                                             | <b>28</b> | <b>29</b>                      |
| <b>30</b><br>1:30<br>CFC Meeting                                                           | DECORATE FOR ADVENT                                                                 |                                                                  |                                   |                                                       |           |                                |

## Union Community Church

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Reverend James Holeman  
Pastor

Tammy Biddix  
Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Nelson  
Communications Director

Jieeun Ha  
Accompanist

Church Hours  
3:00 PM—6 PM  
Tuesday and Thursday



November 9  
November 11  
November 16

175th Celebration!  
Veterans Day Prayer Service  
Community Thanksgiving Service at Sandy  
Plains