



September 2026

Union Community Church

UNION NEWS

Dear Friends and Covenant Partners of Union,

During the month of July, I've been preparing for Union's Youth Confirmation Class. One of the lessons of the class focuses on the roles of Jesus as Prophet, Priest, and King. In studying up, I read the book, "Prophet, Priest, & King: The Three Offices of Christ," by R.A. Mohler Jr. He wrote something I found interesting.

Mohler argues that many churches are really good at remembering one of the offices of Jesus, but not the other 2. For example, many mainline denominations want to only speak about Jesus as prophet. They like to focus on the humanity of Jesus and what a great teacher he was. The cross and Jesus' reign are largely dismissed. On the other hand, many evangelicals focus on Jesus as priest. Jesus' death on the cross did save us, but often these churches fail to focus on how Jesus also wants to be our Lord.

Many Charismatics focus on Jesus as King. They love all that stuff in Revelation about Jesus riding in on a white horse and reigning over the world. But they are so focused on the future, they sometimes miss out on the Kingdom of God in the here and now.

Which of the roles of Jesus do you tend to focus on? We need to remember that he's actually all 3: Prophet, Priest, and King. As Christians we are called to recognize our identity as citizens of the Kingdom of God and give our allegiance to Christ... who both spoke as God's Word in the Gospels and literally is the Word of God (our Prophet), who died as the perfect sacrificial lamb to make us right with God (our Priest), and even now reigns in heaven over a Kingdom that has already been instituted but has not yet been completely fulfilled (as our King). Anything less than that is having allegiance to something less than Jesus Christ.

Sincerely in Christ,
Pastor James



Highlights in this Issue

Kids of the Kingdom Fall
2026 Schedule

Special Event in
September-
Committee Fair

News from Union's
Safety Team

ECO Anniversary &
Session Updates

September Elders

TIM GRIGG
LESLIE HARRIS
JR THOMPSON

Nursery Helpers

SEPT. 6- VICKY & FIONA
SEPT 13- PAM & TWILAH
SEPTEMBER 20-MELODY & SHELLY
SEPTEMBER 27- KIM & SALLY

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Webpage: union-communitychurch.com

Office Hours 3 PM—6 PM
Tuesday and Thursday

ECO ANNIVERSARY

Dear Union Community Church, July 26 marks a year of your faithful partnership in this covenanted order of flourishing churches making disciples of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for choosing to walk alongside ECO in our shared calling to advance the gospel and nurture thriving congregations. Your participation strengthens the bonds of covenant community and reflects the beauty of Christ's body working together in mission.

May this anniversary renew your vision, deepen your fellowship, and encourage you in the ongoing work of disciple-making and Kingdom impact.

With gratitude and joy in Christ,
ECO Synod Staff



Session Updates

NEW MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

Session has been at work matching up our Mission and Vision Statements with our goals as a church. For many years our Mission Statement has been "Seeking to Know Christ and Make Christ Known." This is a great statement! Session wanted to keep the emphasis of this past mission statement while also connecting it to our new logo (of a tree) and our Flourishing goals for the next 3 years. Our new Mission Statement is: **"Go and Grow Disciples."**

Our new Vision Statement is: **"Union Seeks to be Rooted in Christ, branching into the Community, and Flourishing Every Season."** Next month Session will share our churches updated goals!

Flourish Team Updates

September Discipleship Practice- Celebration

The Challenge: The world is filled with reasons to be downcast. But deeper than sorrow is the unbroken pulse of God's joy. To set our hearts on this joy reminds us that we can choose how we respond to any particular moment. We can search for God in all circumstances, or not. Every small experience of Jesus with us is a taste of the joy that is to come. We are not alone- and that in itself is reason to celebrate.

The Practice: Try One of the Following

- *Find a Joy-Filled Place...* Identify a place or activity easily available where you most readily connect with God. Make an effort to go to that "place" and tell God (in prayer) about the joy you receive there.
- *Celebrate a Person Who Brings You Joy...* Ask God how you might celebrate them in a way that encourages them. Let this celebration be an opportunity to tell the person how precious he or she is to you and to God.
- *Celebrate God...* Even when it is hard to find things to be thankful for, we can always take time to thank God for who he is!
- *Come to the Community Fair...* Celebrate all the ways Union is the hands and feet of God. Look for a committee where you can get involved, celebrating all the gifts God has given you!

Worship & Commitment Updates

Greetings from the Worship and Commitment Committee!

September is already upon us. There's lots of upcoming activities as we gear up for the end of the year.

Communion will be served by intinction on **September 6th**.

The Union Choir/ Ensemble will begin performing in September. We are solidifying dates and will share more information as it becomes available! We are looking forward to bringing back some oldies but goodies!

We are preparing to participate in the **Committee Fair on Sunday, Sept. 20th**. We look forward to discussing with our fellow congregants the importance of our work and all the opportunities we have for participation. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Mentorship & Care Committee Updates

No one should have to walk alone through our journey in life. Whether you're celebrating a milestone, navigating a difficult season, or simply need someone to walk alongside you, the Mentorship and Care Committee is here to help. Please contact **Jr. Thompson (704)865-5696** or **Kennedy Bajek (803)579-2261** if we can help you in any way.

Prayer is one of the greatest gifts we can offer one another. Our new "Prayer Warrior" Team is always open to those who feel called by God to regularly pray for others. If you would like to join us, either to pray for the needs of our church family or are in need of prayer for yourself or someone else, please let our committee know.

"The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective."

-James 5: 16

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

— Galatians 6:2



The world needs
PRAYER WARRIORS
who don't see prayer as
the least we can do
but *the most* we can do.

Strengthening of the Church Updates

Stay tuned for exciting opportunities to connect and serve!

- **Happy Years** will meet Wednesday, September 15 at 12 PM
- **Book Chicks** will meet Monday, September 21 at 6:30PM

Older Youth will begin meeting on **September 20** from **3:30-5:00 PM**. This group is for Middle and High School Students.

Thank you to those who attended our **Kick-off Sunday and Blessing of the Backpacks**. Hoping for great things to come in this upcoming year.

We are excited to announce that we will be starting 2 new groups that will meet monthly. More info is to come. Stop by and see more about it and what SOC is all about at the Committee Fair in September.

News from Union's Safety Team

Church Safety & Security

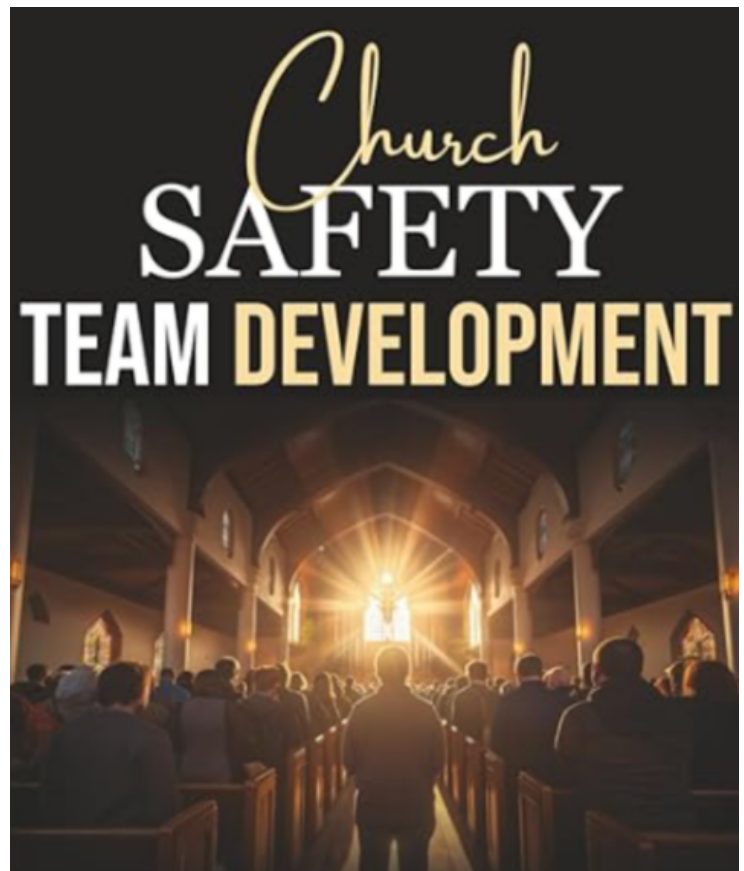
Union's Safety Team and Session continue to review ways to keep Union Community Church a safe and welcoming place for worship, fellowship, and ministry. Following several unusual visitor interactions over the past several months, Session approved a trial period of visible law-enforcement presence during Sunday School and worship while we evaluate our longer-term needs.

Church security involves much more than having an officer present. Guidance provided by Brotherhood Mutual insurance emphasizes a layered approach that includes awareness, trained volunteers, clear procedures, appropriate access and entry practices, early and welcoming engagement with visitors, and coordination with local law enforcement when necessary.

As we continue evaluating these security options and how our church might be safer in general, we want to hear from the congregation. Our goal is not to create unnecessary concern, but neither do we want to overlook our responsibility to provide reasonable safeguards for our members, children, visitors, staff, and volunteers. We appreciate the suggestions already received and encourage members to continue sharing their thoughts with Gary McGinnis & Frank Suggs (on the Safety Team) or Session.



"Ultimately, our objective is simple: to preserve Union as a church where everyone can worship and fellowship in an environment that is both safe and welcoming."



Witness & Service Updates

During the month of July, Union collected **school supplies for Bess Elementary School** based on a Bess staff-generated list of needed items. Our contributions were items purchased and brought to the church, plus items ordered on Amazon and delivered directly to the school. It's hard to put a monetary amount on our contributions due to the way we purchased the items. As you can see from the pictures of just the items we collected and delivered, we provided a lot of school tools. The David Glenn Sunday School class also contributed \$200 which was used to purchase staff mailboxes for all the teachers and additional supplies.



We continue to maintain the **Blessing Box** next to Forestview HS. With rare exceptions, it is filled with food every day. Most days it is emptied within 3 to 4 hours by folks who need the food.

Witness and Service will be participating in the Committee Fair after Worship on September 20th. Come by and see what we do. We always need committee members.



DON'T MISS OUT

Plan to attend!
SEPTEMBER 20
AT 11:00 A.M.,
IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING
WORSHIP!

COMMITTEE Fair

SEPTEMBER 20

A light lunch will be served as we gather for a time of fellowship and connection.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the many ways our church members serve and contribute to the life and ministry of our congregation.

DURING THE COMMITTEE FAIR, YOU'LL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT WITH MEMBERS OF EACH COMMITTEE AND DISCOVER:

- What each committee does** and how it supports the church
- When and where** the committee meets
- Who currently serves** on the committee
- How you might become involved** and share your gifts and talents

Come with your questions, your ideas, and a willingness to learn! Whether you are already serving on a committee, are considering joining one, or simply want to learn more about the work being done throughout our church, *everyone is invited.*

Most importantly, this will be a time to **mingle, fellowship, and enjoy one another's company** as we celebrate the many ways our congregation works together to strengthen the ministry of our church.

Mark your calendar for **SEPTEMBER 20 AT 11:00 A.M.** and plan to join us. **WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!**



Please Keep these ECO Churches in your Prayers this Month:

Triangle Grace Church, Durham- Please keep in prayer Triangle's Wednesday Night Kids clubs that are starting back up again this September! Please pray for good attendance and fellowship for their "Fall Dinners of 7 or 8."

Unity Presbyterian Church, Cleveland- Please keep in prayer Unity's search for a new pastor and their continued work with Rowan Helping ministries (providing help to the homeless).

Walnut Grove Church, Newland- Please keep in prayer the work of Pastor Bob Ivins at Walnut Grove and for the work of their missionaries, Clay and Meg Dale, in Uruguay.

Praying for all People of all Nations

Please keep in prayer the hundreds of people who have been killed close to the Nepal-China border due to the recent catastrophic flash floods there. And keep in prayer Christians in Iran. Under the new "hostile organizations" espionage law, government officials can arrest and persecute Christians for even watching Christian broadcasts. This is a primary way that the Gospel is presented in Iran and Christian leaders are trained.

Also, please continue to pray for the light of Christ to reach the following unreached people groups: Brahmin, Korubo, Buginese, Lao Krang, Silpkar, Chackaravar, Li Bendi, Soboro, Comorian Mwali, Mahratta Kunbi, and Ta Oi. These are the groups we've prayed for in worship this last month.

THREADS.... BRAND NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Threads is a new Sunday School Class that will be starting on **September 6** in the **Women's Parlor** each Sunday at **9AM**. Using material from the BibleProject (www.bibleproject.com), Pastor James will lead the class as it explores how the thread of redemption weaves throughout Scripture. The first class topic will be a refresher on how the Bible fits together and the unified story that the Bible tells! This class is for all ages of adults. We hope that you will join us.



Worship For September

Sermon Series: "Growing Good Fruit by Abiding in the Spirit"

September 6- Philippians 4: 4-9, "Abiding in the Spirit... Gentle Prayers"

-Celebration of the Lord's Supper; Labor Day Weekend

September 13- Mark 9: 42-50, "Abiding in the Spirit... Filled with the Salt of Self-Control"

Lectionary Series: "Philippians... This is Living"

September 20- Philippians 1: 21-30, "This is Living... Suffering to Believe"

September 27- Philippians 2: 1-13, "This is Living... Emptying to be Filled"

October 4- Philippians 3:4b-14, "This is Living... Loss for Gain"

-World Communion Sunday; Celebration of the Lord's Supper

October 11- Philippians 4: 1-9, "This is Living... Practice for Peace"

Finance Corner

FINANCIAL REPORT AS. OF JULY 31, 2026

	<u>June</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Revenue.	\$23,871	\$ 132,598
Expenses	17,455	122,018
	+ 966	+4,164

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Non-budgeted expenses FYI:

-Paid the second payment of \$3000 to Presbytery of WNC.

-Received a receipt stating payment applied to Helene Relief

-As with our home expenses, our utility bills are higher than normal for this period.

Thank you for your continued support! We are so blessed!!

Where God Guides, He provides. Isaiah 58:11

Martha Simmons – Disbursing Treasurer

Jason Morrison – Treasurer

KIDS OF THE KINGDOM



KIDS of the KINGDOM

Growing in Faith, Having Fun, Making a Difference!

 **3:30–5:00 PM**

AUGUST 16th	Kickoff!	
SEPTEMBER 13th	Regular meeting	
SEPTEMBER 18th	Outdoor movie night – families included! 7pm	
SEPTEMBER 27th	Regular meeting	
OCTOBER 11th	Regular meeting	
OCTOBER 25th	Pumpkin Party	
NOVEMBER 8th	Regular meeting	
NOVEMBER 13th	Indoor Movie night – families included! 6pm	
DECEMBER 13th	Family Christmas Party with meal – times TBD	
JANUARY 10th	Regular meeting	
JANUARY 24th	Skating	