the Newsletter

HOLIDAY EDITION







Union Church

"Loving God ~ Loving People"

www.weareunion.org

Dear Members and Friends,

We are on the doorstep of the Holiday season. Thanksgiving, Christmas and a New Year, birth these important attitudes: **Thankfulness** for all our blessings; **Awe** in the fact that God so loved me, He sent His Son; and **Hope** as we turn the calendar to a new year and close the book on the past.

I will begin a new Sunday morning series on November 15th, which will take us all the way into 2027. It will be called…*"Jesus' Attitude Adjustment"!* This is the time of the year we think about the people in our life. And we think about what we've lost and the future. Joy and sadness blend together in our emotions.

And then comes JESUS! The Gift of Christmas! His gifts…God's love, the guarantee of eternal life, strength to go on, contentment, an appetite for God, a caring heart for others, remaking of my mind and heart, and so much more.

I look forward to helping you unwrap these Holiday gifts from God.



Jane and I love you forever!

Happy Holidays!

Pastor Bill



WORSHIP SERVICES

In-Person & Online

CDs Of Sermons Are Available Upon Request

SUNDAY

Blended Service 9:00AM

Contemporary Service 11:00AM

Located In The Main Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY

The Base Children's Ministry 3:30PM -7:15PM

Located In The Base (Upstairs)

The Rock Youth Ministry 5:00PM -7:15PM

Located In The Main Sanctuary

Cross Talk 6:00PM

Located In The Historic Sanctuary

NURSERY
Is Available For All Services

CHOIR REHEARSAL
Wednesdays At 7:15PM



A Message from Your Board of Directors



A Gift of Gratitude: Sharing God's LOVE This Christmas

As we celebrate the Christmas season, your Church Board would like to express our heartfelt thanks for your generosity, prayers, and faithful support throughout the past year. Because of you, our church continues to be a place of worship, fellowship, hope, and service to our community. Every gift and every act of kindness makes a difference.

Your generosity is changing lives! Last Christmas, many of you not only provided gifts for Union's kids and teens, but you also helped to provide toys to more than 600 children in our community through Elaine Powell's Christmas ministry. We look forward to bringing Christmas joy to many more. Each toy represents more than a gift - it is a reminder to a child and family that they are loved and cared for. Thank you to everyone who makes this ministry possible!

As we reflect on the blessings of the past year, we invite you to consider a special ***Gift of Gratitude*** this Christmas. If our church has touched your life, strengthened your faith, or provided a place of belonging, please prayerfully consider an additional gift to support our church, its ministries, and its mission in the coming year. Give as you are able, with a grateful heart.

Together, we can continue sharing Christ's love and making a difference in the lives of others.

Thank you for being part of our church family. May God bless you and your loved ones with peace, joy, and abundant blessings this Christmas and throughout the New Year!



Lisa Jarrett (President) Gary Smith (Vice President) Dorothy Howell (Secretary)
Elaine Powell Dennis Dunn Joy Brastrom Ron Hogue



'Tis the Season



It's hard to believe that the holiday season is here! Months ago, we started to see the signs. Store shelves were being stocked with holiday items and preparations for holiday events were underway. In like manner, the evidence of of this new season God has ushered us into here at Union is all around, and has been for some time now. We continue to be awestruck and give thanks for what God has been and is doing. His provision, which has truly been like the fish and loaves, has carried us throughout the year and continues to help set our focus on building and expanding our territory. The blessings from our major fundraisers were stretched far beyond what was possible in years past, and this year's ***'Bridging the Gap'*** campaign brought in **$22,455.73**.

We are committed to continue to be faithful stewards of Union's ministry, mission, and His provision. God has prepared us and set the stage for us to take the next steps of faith together, as He directs our path. I want to emphasize the ***together*** part, and just how crucial it is for us to be united in carrying out our mission to spread the Gospel and the love of Jesus Christ. Not one of us is meant to do it alone. Jesus was fully God and He didn't do it alone…although He absolutely had the power to do so. That was never the plan. His ministry with His disciples, perfectly models for us what can be done when people with different socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, life experiences, gifts, talents, perspectives, and even levels of faith work together despite their differences to accomplish a kingdom assignment.

So, as we enter into this holiday season with the heightened sense of **JOY**, **HOPE**, and **PEACE** that it brings…I pray that we will be extra intentional about being a vessel that reflects those Fruits of the Spirit to each other. I pray that we focus on the reason for the season and the **LOVE** that came down from Heaven, not just to save us…but to demonstrate how we should love one another.

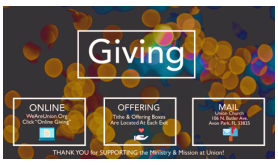
Join me in thanking God in advance for a New Year that will take us into a deeper level of **UNITY**, His perfect plan and purpose, and an overflow of His blessings, so we can be a bigger blessing for the kingdom and bring Him glory! May God bless each and every one of you for your faithful support and commitment to Union's ministry and mission.

Wishing You All A Blessed Beyond Measure Holiday Season & A Happy New Year!

Tracey Caraballo







Creative ARTS ministries

What a Fall-Winter season this is going to be for the Creative Arts Ministry at Union!

And here are a few dates to remember…

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18 @6:00PM



This will be another installment of our ***'Praise and Worship'*** gatherings. This evening is always a time when we come together to give our all to Jesus through inspirational music and words. It is a time to reflect, to surrender, and to lift not only our Lord in love and praise, but to each other as well.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH @7:00PM

This day is going to be one of the most memorable dates of your Christmas season. It is the first Sunday of Advent and the Base Ministry will be providing a very special presentation at both worship services in the morning, and then the ***Voices of Truth Choir*** will present a very unique and beautiful Christmas program that promises to be like no other Christmas program you will see this year!!!

A cross between Saturday Night Live and Christmas traditions, you will see a side of the choir you don't get to see during Sunday worship!



And…"Why?", you ask is it at 7:00pm?

Following the program, we will all go outside for the official lighting of the church campus that our decorating team has been working so hard to present.

And coming in January…

An evening of stories based on the popular NPR program entitled, ***'The Moth Radio Hour'***.

The Moth is a global storytelling program. Their mission is to inspire people to listen and share openly, think and feel deeply, and expand their understanding of one another.

Founded in 1997 by novelist, George Dawes Green, The Moth was inspired by sultry evenings of storytelling in Green's native Georgia – nights when moths were drawn to the porch light as friends gathered to share true stories. What began in George's NYC living room, quickly grew into a phenomenon, spreading to larger venues throughout the city.

Stay tuned for the exact date and how to participate.

Pastor Jim Lanier





During the holiday season, we can get so wrapped up in our traditional celebrations that we forget to put ***GOD*** at the forefront of all holidays. Before we celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year, we need to first celebrate "Falling in love with Jesus". This is a perfect time for kids to learn to look past a single holiday and cultivate a year-round habit of appreciation and recognizing the love for God in our everyday life.

Falling in love with Jesus is not about following a strict rulebook, it's about building a close relationship with the One who loved you first. The more time we spend with Him in the Word and praise, the more we fall in love with Him. Children will learn about putting Jesus first before family, friends, electronics, extra-curricular activities and self. They will learn what it means to love Him in the hard times and sad times, as well as the happy and glad times.

God doesn't want to force a relationship with Him, He wants us to choose Him over everything and everyone. God loved us so much that He sent His one and only Son to die for our sins. Our love for Him is just response to His massive love for us.

Happy Holidays from The Base Ministry!

Fawn Waterman / Children's Minister

Holiday Events

November 11th – Base Family Night Dinner
November 29th – Base Children's Christmas Performance
December 16th – Base Children's Christmas Party



We are excited about what God is doing through our Youth ministry at Union Church! We look forward to continuing to build relationships, grow in our faith, and to create opportunities for our teenagers to discover who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him.

A New Youth Building!

We are excited about our new Youth building and the opportunities it will provide for our teenagers. We look forward to having a safe place they can call their own, and come together to grow in their relationship with Christ.

Dive Deeper Bible Study

Our Dive Deeper Bible study begins Sunday, November 8th @10am and is designed for teenagers and young adults. This is an opportunity to connect with others, spend time in God's Word, ask questions, and discover how scripture applies to everyday life.

Weekly Youth Group

Our Youth group continues to meet weekly. We want our teenagers to know that church is a place where they are welcomed, loved, and encouraged to be themselves, while learning about Jesus and who they are in Christ. We look forward to another season of meaningful conversations, friendships, and spiritual growth.

HOLIDAY EVENTS:

Christmas Movie Outing– "Zero A.D."
Christmas Caroling
(Stay tuned for dates and times!)

Thank you for your continued prayers, encouragement, and support of our Youth ministry. We are excited about what lies ahead and grateful to be a part of a church that cares about reaching the next generation.

Wishing You All an Amazing Holiday Season,

Pastor Eddie / Youth Pastor

Hello Union Family!

I've been working on a lot of things behind the scenes over the last few months. Upgrades that will reduce costs over time for service subscriptions, as well as giving new tools to our staff to better connect with our members / congregation, and make operating the tech booth on Sunday mornings even easier, and more reliable than ever before! I've affectionately named this project, **"The Union HUB",** as it's a secure, centralized system that all staff have access to. Even volunteers will have customized permission-based access to the system depending on their roles with our various ministries and missions.

This system stands to eventually replace up to 3 of our subscription-based services that we utilize; from managing our membership database...to planning our services...to how we display media and lyrics for songs, sermon notes, and other content on our screens in the Millennium Sanctuary, and across the campus. The best part of all, is that it all currently runs on the hardware that the church owns on our premises that we've invested in since I came on staff in 2022. At some point soon, there will be some additional infrastructure needed to help establish some of the connections to our projectors over the network.

When I started here 4 years ago, I never imagined that I would be able to even develop something of this caliber. But God's gifted me with new insight on how to find ways to leverage technology to help give us the tools to further God's work and help grow His kingdom. I'm incredibly thankful and blessed to be in this position here where I can continue to serve God in any way I can.

God Bless & Happy Holidays! Ryan Haynie / Production / IT Manager



CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT

Church Membership

Full-time Membership:	519
Households Represented:	338
Associate Membership:	26
Households Represented:	16
Total Membership	***545***
Households Represented	***354***

Please direct address, phone number, e-mail, or any changes to your contact information to Chris Hess @ chess@weareunion.org (863) 453-3345 or Mailing address: 106 N Butler Avenue, Avon Park, FL 33825

Our deepest sympathy to the family & friends of…

- Jeannie Crocker
- Jane Haynie
- Ed Wright
- Austin Gould
- Pete Reiffer
- Marty Sauthoff
- Jerry Niedermeier
- Jane Golden
- Immy Heidloff

Welcome to our newest Members…

- Bob & Diane Clemniewski
- Kime Cole
- Betty Dourlain
- Ken & Carol Grimm
- Gayle Homrich
- Barbara Jordan
- Kurt Korvus
- George Larson
- Carol Mitchell
- Noelle Palcious
- Marlene Taylor

BAPTISM

October 11th, 2026

- **Aaron Beeching**
- **Carol Gimm**
- **Gayle Homrich**
- **Kurt Korvus**

Thank you for your support and kindness!

To all the Christmas elves who have helped bring this beautiful and glorious holiday to fruition, I sincerely appreciate each of you. Your contributions bring everyone closer to the heart of God with your gifts and sacrifices. We didn't complete all of the 36 iron statues that needed a permanent facelift…but did indeed bring some to life beautifully. Ryan Haynie & Joy Brastrom were instrumental in this huge undertaking, working hours, and Ryan having the keen insight to the world of rope lights!

AL-ANON — **Tuesdays @12pm In Portable #1**

Freedom From Your Hurts, Habits, & Hang-Ups — Celebrate Recovery — A CHRIST CENTERED Recovery Program — EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT @ 6:00PM | LOCATED IN PORTABLE 1 — **Tuesdays @6pm in Portable #1**

UNITY SERVICE RECOVERY AA — **Tuesdays, Thursdays & Saturdays @12pm In Church Library**

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS® — **Tuesdays @10:30am in Portable #1**

NA — **Saturdays @7pm in Church Library**

november 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

december 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30*	31		

january 2027

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Nov 1	Communion Sunday
Nov 5	Serendipity Group
Nov 7	Jerry Niedermier Memorial
Nov 11	Veteran's Day
Nov 17	Sr. Connection Luncheon
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Day
Nov 29	1st Sunday of Advent
Nov 29	Union Wear Sunday
Nov 29	Special Offering Sunday
Nov 29	Choir Christmas Program

Dec 3	Serendipity Group
Dec 6	Communion Sunday
Dec 15	Sr. Connection Luncheon
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Service
Dec 25	Christmas Day
Dec 27	Union Wear Sunday
Dec 27	Special Offering Sunday
Dec 28	thru Dec. 31 Office Closed
Dec 30	New Years Eve Service

Jan 1	Happy New Year
Jan 3	Communion Sunday
Jan 4	Men's Bible Study
Jan 7	Serendipity Group
Jan 18	MLK Day – Office closed
Jan 19	Sr. Connection Luncheon
Jan 24	Special Offering Sunday
Jan 31	Union Wear Sunday

Happy Birthday!

November

1 Dash Breedlove
3 Paul Warnecke
4 Kale Bradley, Colton Dunn, Avery Jahna & Pam Puterbaugh
5 Capone Hodo
7 Christian Caraballo, Kathy Kerner & T. J, Ledbetter
8 Janice Hinkle & Linds Pontarelli
10 Sue Thompson
11 Tim Ellis & Dave Smigliani
12 Christie Frenche'& Amanada Meredith
13 Don Chamberlain & Flora Rivera
14 Keith Bentley & Amanda Elder
15 David Nixon
16 Ellie Alphin & Jim Serwas
17 Reina Diaz
18 Kelaine Gonzales, Frank Hodo, Connie Nadrizny & Karmella Rogers
19 Helen Hodo, Linda Rogers & Kathy Rose
20 Tracey Caraballo
21 Tony Audia & Elijah Degand
22 Beverly Barnhart, Richard House Noelle Palacios & Bernie Weithorn
24 Ralph Puterbaugh & Lisa Short
25 Carol Dingman, Bill Jarrett Eddie Morrison & Sandy Sexton
26 Jane Avery, Chris Bruns & Goldie Sprandel
27 Susan Seitz
28 Ully Gomes & Chris Williams
30 Shirley Harris

December

1 Greg Ghetia, Sydney Lanier, Keira Murray Willie Nelson & Nathan Springsteen
2 Christine Mailhot
3 Sue Johnson & Alida Rodriquez
4 Janice Ellis, Carman Haynes & Beth Oliver
5 Zeneida Chaplin, Beth Jahna & Skylar Owens
6 Denise Smigliani
7 Judie Subat
9 Allan Liskey
10 Deb Holden
11 Roger Brown, Christopher Hernandez & John Juve
12 Pat Northrup
14 Don Arebaugh
15 Linda Johnson
16 Katheryn Trujillo
17 Jessica Navarro
18 Miranda Bernhard
19 Nancy Egley & Caitlin Rose
20 Phillip Czuk & Skyler Navarro
21 Aaron Jahjah, Maddie Merandi, Christopher Pingel & Mark Schrader
22 Brooklyn Sneed
23 Don Hickman
24 Ed Bartow, Doug Byrum & Rose Ogle
25 Brad Hughes, Carol Smith, & John VanDuesen
26 Hannah Fisher
27 Penny Anderson & Aleiah Mendez,
28 Keith Hunnicutt
29 Ronnie Green & Alicia Sullivan
30 Jerry Lake & Pearl Parsell
31 Norm Herron, Susan Hodo, Mark MacNeill & Brenda Scruton

January

1 Tamara Haynie
2 Steve Becker & Brenda Blanton
3 Wayne Benson & Emilicno Garcia
5 Candice Rose
6 Carol Loos, Bob Morrison & Nanette Spahler
7 Zaida Gross, Adriana Miranda & Bill Vale
10 Bob Benton, Richrd Carden, Joan Solomon & TaRiah Tillman
11 Carrie Raker, Desiree Vincent & Nic Watson
12 Destiny Pagan
13 Chloe Berlin
14 Clint Hunnicutt, Lauren Le'on & Christal Snider
16 Jay Francis & Mary Ann Wright
18 Dennis Johnson
19 Michele Archer
20 Carol Gillings, Ron Hall, Kenny Haney & Bob Smith
22 Beverly Hickman & Gene Parcell
24 Halle Robinson & Tracy Scheid
25 Brody Alley & Fawn Waterman
26 Don Benna, Bill Devans & Valerie Pingel
27 Gloria Clow
28 Patricia King, Angela Sanchez & Jan Telling
29 Doris Benna, Theresa Brown & Lisa Davis
Dorothy Niedermeier
31 Sandy Blasius, Rodney Davis, Aleiannie Donald, Dave Westlake & Pam Lanier

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happy anniversary

November

7 Trey & Mandy Jaques
Dave & Jan Strasser
9 Gene & Pearl Parsell
Keith & Suzi Hunnicut
11 Milton & Sue Distin
Dave & Denise Smiglaini
17 Gary & Linda Stokes
28 Dave & Mary Wolf
29 Alex & Vivana Degand
Paul & Brenda Scruton
30 Don & Patti Arebaugh

December

5 Bill & Debbie Vale
7 Craig & Kathy Kerner
10 Jim & Jane Mechling
12 Tim & Sue Ellis
Orrin & Barbara Schaal
19 Paul & Linda Rogers
23 Ron & Judy Booth
28 Kevin & Joy Brastrom
29 Joseph & Anneliese Vincent
30 Lee & Goldie Sprandel

January

1 Ralph & Pam Puterbaugh
5 Darren & Delores Breedlove
7 Barry & Linda Twibell
12 Ron & Denise Hogue
13 Rodney & Lisa Davis
25 D L & Charity Spurlock
26 Christopher & Valerie Pingel