

the Newsletter

Welcome Summer!

2026



Dear Friends and Members,

Summer is on the doorstep. Many of you have headed to “cool” down for a while. Many of the rest of us take vacation time during these summer months. But we will continue to bring you the best worship services we can provide.

Thanks to technology you can stay connected to our worship on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings on Facebook, YouTube and our website at www.weareunion.org We pray for you and miss you and look forward to seeing you in the Fall and Winter.

I am in the beginning of an important series called, “Soul Toxins”. In Christ, we look at the things that steal our mental and spiritual health. That series is on Wednesday evenings a 6:00 pm at our Crosstalk service.

On Sunday mornings at 9 am and 11 am, our new series is,

“WANT A GREAT LIFE? ... STAY CONNECTED!”

This series explores the “*Fruit of the Spirit*” that should be growing in all our lives.

We love you and miss you and pray for you who are with us all summer, and also for those who are up north.

God Bless you with health and happiness!

Pastor Bill



PURPOSE

Loving God ~ Loving People

VISION

Together we will create an atmosphere where people experience God’s love.

MISSION

Motivated by God’s love and fueled by His grace, whenever and wherever a hand reaches out for help, we want the hand of Jesus to be there.
For this we are responsible.

JOIN US FOR CDs Of Sermons Are Available Upon Request

WORSHIP

In-Person & Online

SUNDAY

Blended Service
9:00AM

Contemporary Service
11:00AM

Located In
The Main Sanctuary

Nursery
Is Available For All Services

WEDNESDAY

The Base Children’s Ministry
3:30PM-7:15PM
Located In
The Base (Admin Bldg/Upstairs)

The Rock Youth Ministry
5:00PM-7:15PM
Located In
The Main Sanctuary

Cross Talk
6:00PM
Located In
Historic Sanctuary

Choir Rehearsal
Wednesdays @ 7:15PM

Freedom From Your Hurts, Habits, & Hang-Ups



Celebrate Recovery[®]

A CHRIST CENTERED Recovery Program

EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT @ 6:00PM | LOCATED IN PORTABLE 1

From the Board of Directors

Dear Church Family,

We would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for the incredible support you continue to show our church and its ministry. Your generosity—through your time, prayers, and resources—has been a true blessing and allows us to carry out our mission in meaningful ways each and every day.

Because of you, our church remains not only a place of worship, but also a welcoming home for fellowship, service, and spiritual growth. We are deeply thankful.

As we look ahead, we also recognize an opportunity to come together in a new way—one that calls us to step out in our faith with courage and trust. In years past, we were fortunate to have a dedicated group of gentlemen who met regularly to help care for our church building and grounds. Over time, many of those individuals have stepped back due to age, and we are now seeking to build a new team.

Stepping out in faith often means answering a call before we feel fully ready. It takes courage to offer your time in a busy world, to try something new, or simply to say, “Here I am—send me.” In these acts of willingness and bravery, our faith becomes visible, and our church community is strengthened.

We are looking for volunteers who may be interested in helping with occasional projects such as painting, light maintenance, and outdoor work like weeding and general upkeep. These efforts help keep our church safe, welcoming, and beautiful for all who gather here. Whether you have a particular skill or simply a desire to lend a hand, your help would be greatly appreciated. Even a small amount of time can make a big difference when we work together.

If you feel called to step out in faith and serve in this way, please reach out to the church office or speak with a member of the Board. We would be happy to share more details and coordinate opportunities that fit your availability.

Thank you again for being such a vital part of our church family. Your continued support—and your willingness to step forward in faith—are what sustain and strengthen this ministry.



With appreciation and blessings,
The Board of Directors

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

Have a blessed summer!!!

It's Time...To LIVE BRAVE

So, in my last article I mentioned a book by Joyce Meyers, “DREAM **BIG**. PRAY **BOLD**. LIVE **BRAVE**.” Ms. Chris introduced this book to the staff, and we decided to read through it together and discuss it at our weekly staff meetings. It has been such a blessing to us individually, and as a team. It absolutely speaks to where we are as a church, and to where God is leading us.



I also spoke of a ‘*divine shift*’ that has taken place. A shift in our mindset, from that of merely keeping our heads above water...to fixing our eyes on Jesus and walking on water; allowing the Lord to take us deeper in our ministry and Kingdom building assignment. HIS faithful provision by means of YOUR faithful support and generosity, have positioned us to begin to give wings to our faith. Our **Easter: Seeds of Hope** fundraiser (the first of our triune fundraising campaigns for the year), blessed us with **\$48,144!**

So, we’ve been dreaming big, praying bold, and for such a time as this...we’re trusting God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to show us how to **LIVE BRAVE!** To continue to care and be good stewards of all He has blessed our ministry with, and to boldly and bravely take steps we’ve only dreamed about taking.

We’re excited about what the future holds, and as the Lord orders our steps, we’ll be sure to share the journey with you all. Thank you so much for your commitment to the ministry and mission here at Union. We pray we all have a blessed and fruitful summer.



With Sincere Gratitude,

Tracey Caraballo
Administration & Finance

Easter : Seeds of Hope
\$48,144



God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.

Ephesians 3:20 (MSG)

So, the summer months are approaching, and this is a time when we usually...

WAIT JUST A MINUTE HERE!!!

Did someone think that this is a time to slow down???

I should think **not** !!!



Yes, the Creative Arts has had a remarkable season of music, programs, and worship! But it can't stop now! During the summer, the Arts has a lot of their participants return to the north and things seem to get smaller and less 'grand' if you will. Even for others we are all in and out because of vacations and other summer activities. But for those of us still here, we feel the need to present the message of Jesus in alternative yet still exciting ways. And that we shall do!

The 9am service will incorporate some new inventive ways to keep the Gospel alive, and the 11am service will continue with its powerful praise and worship!

And speaking of praise and worship...we are indeed planning another evening of music, prayer, and testimony in the near future. And while the **Voices of Truth Choir** will not be singing on Sundays for a while, this amazing group will continue with a special summer '**Choir Camp**' that will be full of music, activities, games, and much more! Now will be the time for anyone who has been curious about this choir to join in and be a part. You might just get hooked into becoming a permanent member!!



In many churches across the nation, unless a school is attached directly to the church, the Arts has become a place to consist of basically a praise team for Sundays. But here at Union, even in our small community, we continue to thrive with not only that praise team, but a full choir, a small but effective worship orchestra, soloists, musicians, youth program music and praise, talented actors and speakers, and so much more!

WE ARE SO BLESSED!!!

I personally want to thank you all for always supporting the Creative Arts and any wild ideas I may come up with. I do hope and pray that we return to you the **JOY** of the Lord through our gifts.

God Bless,
Jim
(Creative Arts Pastor)

Hello Union Family!

If you haven't noticed recently, we now have more options for Assisted Listening. We now have a WIFI Assisted Listening system that runs over our guest WIFI systems. Unfortunately, it currently is restricted to Android based phones and devices only, due to system limitations on Apple products set by Apple themselves. But when you connect to our guest network (**Union Guest**) and scan the QR code shown on the Assisted Listening advertisements, it allows you to listen to the audio stream using your own Bluetooth headphones or Bluetooth streaming audio capable hearing aids.

We are looking for more volunteers for our tech team on Sunday mornings, as we are looking to build a team for running our live streams. No experience is necessary. And yes, while I can run everything in the tech booth by automations, it will make things a lot more interactive for viewers at home as well as allow us to do more in house. If anyone is interested, please stop by and see me before or after service on Sunday or even stop by the office during the week.

I thank God in advance for the amazing things He's going to do for us here at Union, and I'm looking forward to seeing this vision come to fruition.

With love,

Ryan Haynie
Production / IT Manager





Summer Program 2026 Theme

Disciple Me

(taken from "Despicable Me")

I, like the kids, have loved those little yellow Minions and watched them diligently work for the praise of their boss; carrying out each mission that was handed to them. They were both entertaining and goofy. We have a Father in Heaven who has an assignment for each of us. When we become believers, we are expected to make disciples of all the nations. God wants us to be dedicated to Him and work just as faithfully as those Minions did to change the world forever.

For the first week, the kids will learn that as a believer they have a secret weapon that will help them fight against the evil of this world...the Bible.

The second week, the kids will learn that just like the villain in "Despicable Me" had to change his evil ways in order to do good, we too must do the same. Jesus wants us to realize we are all sinners who need to be saved.

The third week, the kids will learn to keep their focus on Jesus, especially when the world tries to distract them. Don't let things make you go bananas like the Minions!

For the fourth week, the kids will learn, that just like the Minions were completely loyal to their boss, the kids need to be loyal and obedient to God. They will learn to put their trust in God and accept Him as their Lord and Savior.

Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

~ 1 Thessalonians 5:11



UPCOMING EVENTS:

- ⇒ **May 10th** – Happy Mother's Day
- ⇒ **June 1st-26th** – Summer Program
(Monday-Thursday 9am-4:30pm Trips every Tuesday & Thursday)
- ⇒ **June 28th** - Summer Program Sunday
(9am & 11am services / Hospitality)



Over the past few weeks, I've been meeting and having discussions with our Gatlinburg camp leadership team (Pastor Bill, Ms. Chris, etc.) In those discussions, we often share stories of past Gatlinburg camping trips, funny stories, pranks, and just good fun. But most importantly, we reflect on the spiritual growth of our teens, our volunteers, and even ourselves. We remember the times that the Holy Spirit has fallen down on all of us around the campfire, all the baptisms, and all the lives that have been changed over the years. When we look back, we see how God worked out all the details of various situations that we were deeply concerned and worried about. When we look back, we see how God weaves ALL things together like a beautiful tapestry. And in those times, we can see hope for the future.

Yes...there's a lot of work to be done. Planning, parent meeting (Wednesday, May 6th), paperwork, adult/volunteer training, etc. But ultimately, we can't fall into the trap that our best years are in the past. We have to look forward to what God is doing this year at Gatlinburg 2026.

If you're a parent, I would like to share a few reasons why you should consider allowing your teenager to go to camp with us this year. First, camp takes your child out of the normal routine. This opens them up to new friendships, new experiences, and new ways of looking at life. Camp also places your child in an environment where Christ is loved and shared. Camp is a place where they can learn teamwork, try new things, have a safe place to talk about their feelings, and most importantly...learn to love Jesus Christ our Lord & Savior.

To our AMAZING church members...as we prepare for this summer's Gatlinburg camping trip, would you consider sponsoring one of our teenagers and be the next generation of life-giving change?

Speaking of the next generation...I want to congratulate our 2026 graduating seniors!

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------------|
| ♦ Will Braggs | | ♦ Daphni Myohanen |
| ♦ Tristan Calvin | | ♦ Riya Radford |
| ♦ Landon Chen | | ♦ Marisela Ramirez |
| ♦ Nwjkihi Cohen | | ♦ Jeremiah Rosario |
| ♦ Jacob Flowers | | ♦ Rodrigo Verrgas |
| ♦ Jaelynn Wallace | | |

Children's VBS/Summer Program Scholarship Form

Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

☀️ \$100 for 2026 Children's Ministry Scholarship ☀️

I enclosed a donation for \$ _____ to help sponsor _____ CHILD(ren) for 2026 Children's VBS / Summer Program

Gatlinburg Youth Summer Camp Scholarship Form

Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____

☀️ \$250 for 2026 Gatlinburg Youth Summer Camp ☀️

I enclosed a donation for \$ _____ to help sponsor _____ YOUTH for 2026 Gatlinburg Youth Summer Camp



CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT



Church Membership

- ✝ Full Time Membership: 518
- ✝ Households Represented: 354
- ✝ Associate Membership: 25
- ✝ Households Represented: 16
- ✝ Total Membership 543
- ✝ Households Represented 370

In Deepest Sympathy

Our condolences go out to the following family, friends and members of:

- ✝ Betty Scott ✝ Billie MacLean
- ✝ Martin Rivera ✝ Don Fogle
- ✝ Evelyn Gunter

Welcome To The Family

Please welcome our newest members:

- ◆ Laura Anthony
- ◆ Carol Barrow
- ◆ Natasha Covert
- ◆ Phillip & Romona Czuk
- ◆ Ray & Sandy Hicks
- ◆ John Juve
- ◆ Christine Mala
- ◆ Tracey Scheid
- ◆ Tony & Sonni Dee Audia
- ◆ David & Susan Buelow
- ◆ Kathy Cross
- ◆ Margaret Doyle
- ◆ Dennis & Brenda Johnson
- ◆ Ellen Krupa
- ◆ Robert & Evelyn Smith
- ◆ David & Denise Smigliani

Please direct address, phone number, e-mail, or any changes to your contact information or to get involved or share a concern to Chris Hess @ (863)453-3345.

Mailing address:

106 N Butler Avenue, Avon Park, FL 33825

May 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 AA Mtg Gunter Memorial
3 Communion Worship / SS	4 Men's Bible Study	5 Over-Eaters Al-a-non AA / CR	6 Children/Youth Cross Talk & Choir Gatlinburg Parent Mtg	7 AA Mtg Bible Study	8	9 AA Mtg
10 Worship/SS 	11	12 Over-Eaters Al-a-non AA / CR	13 Children/Youth Cross Talk Sumer Camp Mtg. Choir	14 AA /Bible Study Serendipity	15 Haitian Revival	16 AA Mtg Haitian Revival
17 Worship Sunday School Haitian Revival	18	19 Over-Eaters Al-a-non AA / CR Union Luncheon	20 Children Youth Cross Talk	21 Tampa Bay AA Mtg Bible Study	22	23 AA Mtg
24 Worship/ SS Hands for Homeless Offering	25 Memorial Day	26 Over-Eaters Al-a-non AA / CR	27 Children Youth Cross Talk Pastor Bill's B'day	28 AA Mtg Bible Study	29 Ladies Group	30 AA Mtg
31 Worship/ SS Graduation Sunday  Union Wear						



- 1 Autumn Haynie, Emil Lederer, Joe May & Sue Reiffer
- 2 Alecanah Mendez & Dixie Taylor
- 3 Ellen Myers
- 4 Beverly Mayo, Christian Garica, Mark Cox & Noah Tomblin
- 6 Jacquelin Fowler & Roberta Flowers
- 7 Don Seymour, Kaylee Thigpen, Ken Petery & Rod Lovette
- 8 Arijahna Pough, Glenna Byrum, Lance Depender, Jelyssa Ibarra & Tyra West
- 9 Freddie Jahna, Kyson Jones & Liliana Hillard
- 12 Lewis Gunter & Pam Muske
- 13 Burt Schultz & Ron Hogue
- 14 Latroy Hillard, Paisley Meredith & Patti Joshnick
- 17 Alex Espada, Jeff Welty, Sandy Ripson & Shay Alley-Bonk
- 18 Ellen Krupa
- 19 Denise Hogue, Evelyn Goff & Tony Jenkins
- 21 Patsi Trammel
- 23 Elaine Carden
- 25 Aluna Williams, Jean Bittinger, Jill Green, Linda Stokes & Michelle Sludder
- 26 Beverly Ruble & Xiomara Diaz
- 27 Bill Breylinger & Mandy Flowers
- 28 Beverly Lake, Ellyn Drummond, Jack Mann & Sherry Septer
- 29 Connie Evers
- 30 Anaceli Sacia & Mike Blasius
- 31 Curtis Jones & Sara Albritton



- 2 Donny & Lavada Dunn
- 8 Tom & Mindy Ashbaugh
- 21 Tony & Sonni Audia
- 25 David & Dani Flowers
- 28 Bud & Diane Furr
- 31 Jim & Pam Lanier


June BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Crystal Price & Janet Miler
- 2 Aiden Torres & Betty Barbere
- 3 James Wright, Jerry Martin & Madelene Stitzer
- 5 Gene Albritton & Peyton Cottrill
- 6 Christopher Miles, Cindy Shuee & Kye Rivero
- 7 Suzie Breton
- 8 Brian Larimer, Maggie Divis & McCoy Mikula
- 9 Ryan Haynie
- 10 Eli Guerrero
- 11 Eli Gullett, Jan Smith, Jim Mechling, Linda Miebach & Madi Linsinbigler
- 14 Al Pontarelli, Anneliese Vincent & Camden Alley
- 15 Beverly Schultz, Katelyn Fiedler & Masco Lewis
- 16 Nancy Witte & Tiggy Merancin
- 17 Daisha Smith
- 18 Cindy Gross, Jim Lanier, Jan Stevens, Landon Burnett & Sandra Prince
- 19 Jessie Matthews, Justice Torres & Karen Thomas
- 20 Chris White & David Flowers
- 21 Marilyn Krug & Tim Stallsmith
- 22 Kim Tillis & Patti Arebaugh
- 23 Daphni Myohanen & Kali Snider
- 24 Addie Erwin, Dee Dee Hartstine, Joan Benson & Legend Hillard
- 26 James Baird
- 27 Aaron and Noah Springsteen & Landon Wood
- 28 Albert Jahna, Brandon Brown & Richard Cumpain
- 30 Dee Dee Flowers and Hayli Septer

June 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Base Camp 9-4 Al-a-non/AA CR	3 Base Camp 9-4 Youth Cross Talk G'Burg Mtg.	4 Feeding Tampa Bay Base Camp 9-4 AA/Bible Study	5	6 AA Mtg.
7 Communion Worship Sunday School	8 Base Camp 9-4	9 Base Camp 9-4 Al-a-non AA / CR	10 Base Camp 9-4 Youth Cross Talk	11 Base Camp 9-4 AA Mtg. Bible Study	12	13 AA Mtg.
14 Worship Sunday School	15 Base Camp 9-4	16 Base Camp 9-4 Al-a-non/AA CR	17 Base Camp 9-4 Youth Cross Talk	18 Tampa Bay AA / Bible Study Holiday for Staff	19	20 AA Mtg.
21 Worship / SS 	22 Base Camp 9-4	23 Base Camp Al-a-non/AA CR	24 Base Camp 9-4 Youth Cross Talk	25 Base Camp AA Mtg. Bible Study	26 Ladies Group	27 AA Mtg.
28 Union Wear Worship / SS Union Mission Offering	29	30				



- 3 Jim & Mary Baird
- 8 Gerry & Linda Johnson
- 9 Mike & Donna Russell
- 10 Ron & Bonnie Harris
- 11 Aaron & Annabelle Beeching
- 11 Bob & Dev Holden
- 14 Dick & Bev Smitley
- 16 Burt & Bev Schultz
- 16 Tiger & Rayann Gullett
- 16 Ken & Michelle Koon
- 16 Christopher & Sara Miles
- 16 Walt & Barb Snyder
- 16 Bill & Norma Strickler
- 18 Bob & Betty Morris
- 20 Demetrius & Zeneida Godfrey
- 21 Keith & Ginger Bentley
- 21 Jim & Kimmy Hage
- 23 Augustine & Jelyssa Ibarra
- 23 Richard & Elaine Carden
- 26 Philip & Ramona Czuk
- 26 Michael & Lindsay Guerrero
- 27 Norm & Connie Herron
- 28 Jeff & Yvonne Welty
- 29 Tom & Mary Ann Wright

July 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 No Youth No Children Cross Talk	2 Staff Holiday Tampa Bay AA Mtg.	3	4 AA Mtg. 
5 Communion Worship/ SS	6	7 Al-a-non AA Mtg./ CR	8 Load for Gatlinburg Children/Youth Cross Talk	9 Early Crew Leave AA Mtg. Bible Study	10 Gatlinburg 2026	11 AA Mtg. Gatlinburg 2026
12 Worship /SS Gatlinburg 2026	13 Gatlinburg 2026	14 Al-anon AA Mtg. CR	15 Children Cross Talk Gatlinburg 2026	16 Feeding Tampa Bay AA No-Bible Study Gatlinburg	17 Gatlinburg 2026	18 AA Mtg.
19 Worship Service Sunday School	20	21 Al-a-non AA Mtg. CR	22 Children Youth Cross Talk	23 AA Mtg. Bible Study	24	25 AA Mtg.
26 Union Wear Worship / SS Samaritan Touch Offering Gatlinburg Sunday	27	28 Al-a-non AA Mtg. CR	29 PRAYER & PRAISE SERVICE	30 AA Mtg. Bible Study	31 Ladies Group	



- 1 Jerry Niedermeier
- 2 Jaelynn Wallace
- 3 Ameliana Ibarra, Bev Dunn, Barb Lyttle & Gerri Stallsmith
- 5 Bob Holden
- 6 Courtney Harris & Ron Archer
- 7 Ricky LaFlamboy
- 8 Duke Goff
- 9 Michael Guerrero, Elaine Powell
- 10 Claudia Diamond, Nevaeh Burnett & Ron Booth
- 11 Aashana Hernandez, Gary Hinkle, Mary Baird, Norman Strickler & Teri Hallimen
- 12 Jazmine Mendez
- 13 Ashley Thompson-Mikula
- 14 Aubrianna Wallace, Geri Roosa & Jane Stevens
- 16 Diane Furr, Jeremiah Lambright & Wilfredo Diaz
- 17 Adonis Mendez & Mary Ralston-Gutierrez
- 18 Analis Pough & Michael Flowers
- 19 Allen Pearson
- 21 Anita McCardle
- 22 Jenavieve Gonzalez
- 24 Christina Ramirez
- 25 Leslie Morrison & Shirley Pearson
- 26 Brandon Goff
- 27 Cindy Lair, Cheryl Sime, Nasir Degand & Nathan Cruz
- 28 Dean Bittinger
- 29 Lisa Jarrett
- 30 Dani Flowers, Erma Isaacson, Evelyn Metcalfe & Nesha Becker



- 3 Jeff & Dee Dee Harstine
- 4 Eddie and Leslie Morrison
- 7 Dan & Carol Loos
- 10 Jim & Carol Dingman
- 11 Marc & Tracey Caraballo
- 15 Sonny & Sandy Hicks
- 24 Bud & Gwen Shady
- 26 Greg and Mary Love-Ghetia
- 27 Brandon and Shemkia Swafford
- 29 Gene and Sherry Septer
- 30 Jack and Joan Solomon
- 31 Allen and Shirley Pearson
- 31 Cesar and Lauren Le'on