

S P R I N G 2 0 2 3

the

Newsletter



HAPPY EASTER!



WORDS FROM YOUR LEAD PASTOR

Dear Friends,

Can you believe it? We have entered our Lenten season heading toward Easter. Six weeks to ponder the extravagant love of God, the willingness of Jesus to endure the penalty of my sins, and the wonderful promises of God about heaven and eternal life.

Traditionally, Lent is a time of self-denial and sacrifice for God's work on this earth. A season of generosity for God's ongoing work. Once again, we have an opportunity to deny ourselves and give a little more to our Lenten – EASTER MATCH.

This offering enables us to keep going all summer long when our congregation shrinks to 1/3 of our winter size, and our giving also dives. We do not have an annual pledge drive. We live by faith, trusting God and you for our ability to continue to serve our community.

Your sacrifice will give us the assurance that we can make it through the summer. We have until Easter to make our sacrificial gift. Many of you will be going north for the summer. You can watch our services live on our Church website: weareunion.org or on our Facebook page: UnionChurchAP.

Everything you do and give will enable us to continue to be the "hands of Jesus," to save the lost, and meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of the people God is entrusting to us.

If you have any questions, our Church Treasurer, Tracey or our Executive Pastor, Aaron will be glad to talk to you. And I am always excited to share with you our love and vision about our mission.

Please mark your donation "Easter Match" and/or use the envelope included.

With All My Love
Pastor Bill Breylinger (Lead Pastor)

Join Us This Easter Holy Week Schedule

Wednesday Worship Services

The BASE Children's Ministry
3:30PM – 7:00PM
The ROCK Youth Ministry
5:00PM – 7:15PM
Cross Talk 6:00PM

Mauddy Thursday Service

Service with Communion
April 6th | 6:00PM

Good Friday Service

April 7th | 12:00PM

Spring Festival (For Everyone)

Saturday, April 8th
11:00AM – 1:00PM

Easter Sunday Services

Blended Service
April 9th | 9:00AM
Contemporary Service
April 9th | 11:00AM

*(Nursery Available For All
Holy Week Services)*

He Is RISEN!

Death could not hold Him.
Rejoice in the resurrection
of Jesus Christ.

- Matthew 28 -



Spring is a great time to remind us just how great and powerful our God is. Trees, flowers, and grass that wither during the Winter months begin to grow and become beautiful again during the Spring. This reminds us of what God is doing in us. The more we learn, love, and practice God's teachings, the more we blossom and grow in our faith. Like the plants and flowers, God is doing a new thing in His children. We are growing in faith, love, gratitude, and servitude.

Like nature, our God is everywhere. He is in our bedrooms when we wake up to pray, at the breakfast table, when we ask Him to bless our food, in school as we prepare for new knowledge, and in our Children's Ministry, educating new disciples for His Kingdom. Seeds are being planted in these new disciples, changing their hearts, minds, and ultimately their lives, which will bring God the glory. What a blessing to watch God's Word bring a new thing to life. His children are being transformed into something beautiful that reflect His glory.

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old things passed away, behold, new things have come." 2 Corinthians 5:7

Blessings
Miss Fawn Waterman
(Children's Minister)

Union Church

Spring Festival

Saturday, April 8 | 11AM - 1PM

★ Food ★ Face Paint ★ Games ★ Music

Bunny Hop 🐰 (Best Decorated Vehicle)

Bring Your Easter Basket

106 N Butler Ave Avon Park FL 33825

weareunion.org
 (863) 453-3345

We NEED volunteers to decorate your vehicles & bring Easter Eggs filled with candy!

SUMMER PROGRAM – "Discover Your Strength In God"

This Program will start the Tuesday, June 13, 2023.

Monday – Thursday | 9:00AM – 4:30PM

AGES: 1st – 5th Grade

They will enjoy Bible instruction, art, science, community activities, trips, and outdoor fun.

Our Children's Summer Program Scholarship/Fee will be announced in the near future.

There will be a Parent Meeting in May for those interested in sending their kids to Summer Camp.

Vacation Bible School
VBS

June 5th - 9th
 9AM - 12PM

2 - 12 Years Old

We NEED Volunteers!

See Miss Fawn

CREATED IN CHRIST • DESIGNED FOR GOD'S PURPOSE

SPARK
 STUDIOS

Created in Christ, Designed for God's Purpose

Creative ARTS ministries

Greetings to you all from the Creative Arts Ministry!

An exciting 'triple' event this season began in February with the 'Original Music of Jim Lanier' featuring some of my original compositions in a delightful afternoon with some great guest artists. Then in March the program 'The Strength of the Woman' focused on the accomplishments and achievements of women throughout history.

To wrap up this 'triple' event season, the VOICES OF TRUTH CHOIR will present their very own concert on April 2nd at 4:00pm. It has been several years since this ensemble hosted an afternoon of great music, and this concert will be a great presentation of some of their best performances from Sunday morning worship. This gathering will also include some very special guest soloists to join our concert.

The Creative Arts appreciates your support and I do hope that we continue to always provide a pathway to God's love through our ministry.

Pastor Jim Lanier (Creative Arts Pastor)

Here's a little 'throwback' for you to ponder! This is the Voices of Truth in 1994. (My first year on the job):



If you haven't already, get your 40-Day Devotional to go along with the new message series, that Pastor Bill and Pastor Aaron are preaching every Sunday through Easter: "I DESERVE IT."

Throughout this series, we will take a look at the things we actually deserve that God's forgiveness spares us from:

I Deserve Confusion, But He Gave Me Purpose
I Deserve Fear, But He Gave Me Faith
I Deserve Sadness, But He Gave Me Joy
I Deserve Condemnation, But He Gave Me Mercy
I Deserve Rejection, But He Gave Me Acceptance
I Deserve To Be Counted Out, But He Gave Me Another Chance
I Deserve Death, But He Gave Me Life



"How? You ask. In Christ. God put the wrong on him who never did anything wrong, so we could be put right with God."
2 Corinthians 5:21 (MSG)

Hello Union Family!

So much has been able to get accomplished this quarter with our Tech Ministry! Our Voice over IP phone system upgrade is finally completed, and we're already benefiting from the improved call quality of our new phones! We are also benefiting from the additional network upgrades that were done as a part of the phone system project; including our new fiber optic network backbone which took us from 1 Gbps to 10 Gbps (forgive my tech lingo, it just gets me excited 😄)! Also, as a part of the upgrades we moved our networked file share system onto a new server that is much faster, reliable, resilient against failures, and expandable. This system also ties directly into the fiber optic backbone, allowing for super-fast file transfer and video streaming speeds for files stored locally on that system. The only thing that remains to be done is to run underground conduit and fiber optic data cables to the Historic Church to connect them with a solid and reliable camera link for livestreaming Crosstalk on Wednesday nights.

All these improvements would not have been possible without your continued support to Union Church and our Tech Ministry. I'm deeply touched by your contributions and look forward to continuing to advance our technological capabilities to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to the world and to our community. My faith has only been made stronger through seeing how you respond to our needs. With that said, there are a few more things that we could use some assistance with. As many of you may have noticed, there are many areas on our stage that are dark. This is due to many of our lights burning out. However, I've been told that many of these bulbs are not replaceable due to lack of manufacturing of new bulbs. So we will be needing new lighting fixtures to replace those that the bulbs cannot be replaced on. I also want to replace many of our current fixtures with LED lighting which are brighter, but also are significantly more energy efficient. Doing that alone would decrease our power bill significantly, and LED lights last much longer than traditional incandescent bulbs meaning less maintenance of the fixtures. With LED lighting, I can also install a few more color adjustable LED fixtures to allow for a wider arrangement of stage effects for our theatrical programs and for when groups rent out our sanctuary for special events and concerts. At the time of writing this article, I do not have an estimate on how much it would cost to do these upgrades. We are also in need of a specialized camera for the Historic Church. The reason for it being so unique is that it can be turned on and off remotely from anywhere on our church computer network, as well as being able to be fully controllable with pan, tilt, and zoom functions from a remote control. This will eliminate the need for an iPad to be set up in advance for the Crosstalk service on Wednesday nights to stream the service. This camera setup is about \$899. Another need is our streaming software, vMix, needs an upgrade. We are currently being limited in our ability to be more creative with our live streams when it comes to displaying information and ingesting additional camera feeds. To get the version that we need to control the new camera for the Historic Church as well as to allow for more camera feeds and additional content overlays, we have to get the HD version (we currently have Basic HD) and that will cost \$350. I am also requesting assistance with acquiring a portable soundboard for our recording studio to improve the quality of our audio recordings for the 411 as well as other purposes such as providing superb audio quality for the Gatlinburg Youth Camp and other events indoors or outdoors. I want to get us the Behringer XR18 unit which behaves exactly like our soundboard in the Millennium Sanctuary, and sound profiles can be interchanged between the two. This unit would come out to \$699.

I know this ask is large, but I have absolute confidence that God will find the means to make it happen if it's within His will. I thank you all for your continued support, as well as the support of my volunteer team to help keep things running. To volunteer let me know! I'd love to have you!

God Bless,
Ryan Haynie
Production Manager / IT Administrator



Purpose Statement

Loving God – Loving People

Vision Statement

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

Mission Statement

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.



I love to watch the History Channel – how things were built: The Great Wall of China, The Panama Canal, The International Space Station, etc. What is the one thing they have in common? None of them were built by one person. In order to come into being, a whole lot of people had to use their talents and gifts to contribute to the success of the project.

Sports is a great illustration of this truth. LeBron James could have never won any of his games without his team. Derek Jeter could have never won a World Series by himself. Tom Brady could not have won seven Super Bowls without his offensive line and defense. None of these guys would've gotten the greatest of all time (G.O.A.T.) status without their team. Those teams needed to work together to accomplish all they did.

This is also true with me as the Youth Pastor here at Union. For the past 21 years, I've had an amazing Youth Ministry Team – some just for a season and some have been with me since the beginning (Beckers & Miss Chris), but the truth is, I could not have done it without them.

Right now, I have been praying that God would add more to our team. If God has put teenagers on your heart, would you consider praying about joining our team?

YOUTH MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES / NEEDS

- Small Group Leaders
- Van Drivers (Wednesday Nights & Sundays)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 5th | Movie: "Jesus Revolution"
- March 16th | Aquatica Waterpark
- April 5th | Summer Camp Parent Meeting

God Bless You!

Pastor Eddie Morrison (Youth Pastor)

Hello my Union family! I pray this Spring Newsletter finds you all well. I would like to start off with an AMAZING praise report. I've been keeping you all updated on the progress we've been making reducing our debt. Two years ago, while still in the midst of COVID, we took out a loan to pay back all of our Member Loans to ensure that we were being the best stewards possible. The loan term was set at 25 years to lock in our monthly payment at an amount we could manage. We were radically intentional about paying it off at an accelerated rate, and God moved mountains for us to be able to do so. I am so **THANKFUL, GRATEFUL & BLESSED** to announce that the bank debt has been eliminated!!! Our current church debt is now at **\$183,450.00**, which is interest free debt! We can see the light at the end of the tunnel, and we trust God to direct our path as we tackle the remaining debt.

With that being said, I must be totally transparent with you, as I am committed to always do so. The road has definitely been and continues to be a challenge. Our aggressive approach to paying off our debt combined with rising overhead costs has put us in a difficult position. Our Christmas Match was such a blessing, but what was left in our savings for the harsh summer months has already been depleted because we've had to use it to subsidize our weekly offerings. While we remain thankful for the Manna that God continues to provide, we are trying to navigate through feeling this financial crunch so early in the year. Nevertheless, we trust that God will see us through as He ALWAYS does.

Although the truth may be a hard pill to swallow, we know that the God we serve is bigger than any and every challenge we face. So, we look forward to what God has in store for us as our Easter Match gets underway. I know first-hand what God has been able to do through the vessels here at Union, and I know He'll do it again. He is able to do exceedingly more than we can think or imagine. We have a BIG GOD-So let's pray BIG and believe for it!

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." - Ephesians 3:20-21

My deepest thanks to you all for your faithful support of the Ministry & Mission here at Union!

Tracey Caraballo (Church Treasurer)

Secretary's Report

- Total Full Time Membership: 505
 - Households Represented: 323
 - Total Associate Membership: 38
 - Households Represented: 21
 - Total Membership: 543
 - Total Households Represented: 344
- (This Report is as of 02/28/2023)*

In Deepest Sympathy

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

- † Beverly Nixon (October 21, 2022)
- † Billie Eddington (December 10, 2022)
- † Opal Hickman (December 12, 2022)

To get involved or for all other worship experience info, including but not limited to: Bible Studies, Small Groups, Celebrate Recovery, etc. please contact the Church Office.

Please direct any and all address, phone number, email, or any other changes to your contact info to the attention of Miss Chris Hess. Church #: (863) 453-3345

**In His Service,
Chris Hess (Church Secretary)**

Worship Service Times (In-Person & Online)

Sunday Worship

Blended Service: 9AM | Contemporary Service: 11AM
(Located In The Main Sanctuary)

Wednesday Worship

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)

Choir Rehearsal: 7:15PM

(Located In The Choir Room)

(Nursery Is Available For All Services)

Stay Connected With Us

Church Website: weareunion.org

Facebook: UnionChurchAP (Like, Share, & Follow)

YouTube Channel

<https://m.youtube.com/c/UnionChurchAP/>

CDs Of Sermons Are Available Upon Request

Give To Support The Ministry & Mission At Union

In Person

Tithes & Offering Boxes (Exits In Main Sanctuary)

Mail In

Union Church (106 N Butler Ave Avon Park FL 33825)

Online

- 1) GO to weareunion.org
- 2) SCROLL down on homepage to "Donate Now"
- 3) CLICK "Donate" (Option to give a tithe/offering)
- 4) FILL OUT "Faithstreet" page

Easter Flowers Order Form | Due March 20,2023

Name: _____
 Phone: _____
 In "Memory" of: _____
 In "Honor" of: _____

Mixed Spring Container \$20 Each
Total _____ x \$20 = \$ _____

Hydrangea \$20 Each
Total _____ x \$20 = \$ _____

Easter Lily \$25 Each
Total _____ x \$25 = \$ _____

Grafted Roses (White Pink Multicolor) \$30 Each
Total _____ x \$30 = \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

I will pick up my plant.
(If your plant is not picked up by 04/13/23 it will be donated)

I will donate my plant.

Please detach and return this form with your donation.

Contact Chris Hess for info:
863-453-3345

