

Newsletter

August | September
2021



"Loving God - Loving People"

Update From Your Lead Pastor...

Dear Friends & Members,

August 1 – Summer is quickly running its course and plans are being made for fall and winter at Union. We pray that you are safe and healthy and have been able to travel and enjoy your summer. But at the same time we live in a very uncertain and stressful time.

In Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV), Paul writes, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

Covid Delta Virus Variant is still with us after all these months. Anxiety can be an unwanted side effect and can make us uncertain and afraid. It can prompt us to question everything we ever believed. Fear is the enemy of faith.

Things are not going the way we planned! What are we going to do now? Can we make plans? How will things work out? We have great things to do for God and for people! We want to sing together again in choir. We long to meet together in small groups. We are only 2 ½ months away from a Senior Connections trip to Myrtle Beach. Snowbirds are coming back soon. The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are right around the corner. And... God's still in control! I'm believing God for a normal winter and fall. I'm believing God for time together! I mean really together! Without fear! T.D. Jakes writes in his daily readings, Crushing:

"When we decide to stop fretting and instead turn things over to God – with thanksgiving – we decide to shift our perspective. It may not always feel like it right away, but praying changes us. Praying with gratitude for all God has already done for us and acknowledging just who God is in our lives shifts our minds. This type of praying gives us a different mind-set. We are now transfused with peace, the opposite of anxiety. Our minds are renewed and restored in a way we can't understand, and our hearts are protected from the very thing that worried us in the first place."

God has given us a vision here at Union. God has given Hands For Homeless a vision for a "Navigation Center" to meet the needs of the hurting and homeless. We also have a vision for the future, a "Multi Purpose" building to build disciples. Let us walk together into the future with faith, not fear. I believe God for a great year. Let's claim it!

Also...A BIG "Thank You" for your support financially through this pandemic, and for the youth and children you sponsored for VBS and Gatlinburg. We had so many first time baptisms! Praise the Lord!

God Bless You, Pastor Bill Breylinger (Lead Pastor)

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Executive Pastor UPDATE



*“My heart is yours forever. My heart, my mind, my soul - my heart is yours forever.
My emotions are yours - my heart is yours forever.
All my dreams are yours - my heart is yours forever.
All my plans are yours - my heart is yours forever.
If you want my heart you got it...If you want my yes you got it...If you want my all you got it.”*

These beautiful lyrics, from the worship song, “Have My Heart” by Maverick City Worship seem to sum up this sweet season that not only our church is in, but that I’m in as well. A season of surrender, of openness, of readiness happens to identify our current chapter of life.

We continue to walk by faith as our amazing God continues to show us our next step to take. Focusing on today and not worrying about tomorrow, because tomorrow has enough troubles of its own, has become ever so clear through God’s word. The changes, new guidelines, new formats of worship, new safety measures, and the attempts to keep everyone connected are and have been a focus here at Union. I’m finding that the more we stay open to the “what” and “how” God desires for us the more He reveals His plans for us.

Just to give you an update, here are some of those **plans for the near future of Union**:

As you know, we have such a beautiful connection and support for one of our mission ministries, Hands For Homeless. Everything from assisting with weekly feeding programs, putting together care packages, baking, shopping, donating, or assisting with the Treasure Chest have all been ways that we as a church family continue to be the “hands and feet” of Jesus for Hands For Homeless. As they have taken over ownership and leadership of the **Treasure Chest**, that mission has grown exponentially. With that being said, through much prayer, staff discussion, and leadership from our Board of Directors, we will be selling the **Rock (our current youth building)** to **Hands For Homeless** for the operations and “new home” of the Treasure Chest. This transition will be happening very soon and will be fully paid for by the end of **2021**.

Now I know what you’re probably thinking, what about our Youth Ministry? I’m glad you asked...The money that’s paid from the purchase of the Rock along with other monies raised will go to build a **new Multi Purpose Center**, which will include our **new Youth Ministry** area, north of our Millennium Sanctuary. This move will keep all of our church’s ministries located on the same campus, which will be a benefit for all. This too will also give Hands For Homeless and the Treasure Chest an opportunity to operate and serve from there own campus. Our youth ministry equipment, youth game room furniture, youth camping gear, and other church materials will be relocated to what is currently the Treasure Chest now (the Church Garage/Shed). We will also be able to keep the church gator-cart and church vans parked at the church’s shed. One of the church portables, that the Treasure Chest is also currently using as a Donation Center, will be emptied out as well. After this portable is cleaned and updated it will be used by various groups and ministries of the church.

During the moving and building transition our Youth Ministry will host their Wednesday Worship Services out of our Fellowship Hall at 6PM. Pastor Eddie will also be relocating his office to where our current Nursery is. **The Base Children's Ministry Nursery** is relocating to what used to be a nursery/cry room (many years ago) and even our church bookstore, The Nook. This room is located in the Millennium Sanctuary lobby. We believe that this will actually be a healthy move for our nursery and parents as the parents will have more accessibility to dropping their children off as they attend worship. We will also have a new pager system for parents where they will receive a pager device when they drop off a child. This device will alert in the case of an emergency or if any assistance should be needed. So as you can see, there will be a lot of "moving" (spiritually and physically speaking) going on with our church campus over the next few months.

So, after the purchase of the property, where the Rock is located, Hands For Homeless will continue to aggressively work on reaching the planned goal of building their new place of ministry, the "**Navigation Center**" on that property by the end of **2022**. The operations of this new building will include but not be limited to: a full kitchen (with a walk-in freezer), a cafeteria for feeding programs, client services, administrative offices, care packages, food pantry, etc. So once Hands For Homeless owns the property, they will have The Navigation Center, The Treasure Chest, storage container/units, and parking accessibility on their own entire property.

I know that was a lot; however, I want to do my best at keeping you in the loop. None of this would be possible without your continued support, love, encouragement, and most importantly prayers. If you are interested in supporting any of these projects, whether it be financially, with your time or talents, we not only would appreciate it but thank you in advance. If you have any questions please feel free to give me a call and I will serve you the best that I can. So, as I started this article, I would like to leave you with this:

"All my plans are yours - my heart is yours forever.

If you want my heart you got it...If you want my yes you got it...If you want my all you got it."

P.S. I'm looking forward to the upcoming sermon series that God continues to place on my heart for our 11AM Sunday Worship Service. Would love to have you, your family, your friends, and neighbors come and join us as we worship and receive God's word together on Sunday mornings at 11AM.
Love You All! God Bless You All!

Loving God & Loving People, Pastor Aaron Jahjah (Executive Pastor)

PRAISE, PROGRESS & THE PATH AHEAD

Hello, my Union family! I always take pleasure in keeping you all in the "know" with the status and stewardship of our finances. As we enter the 2nd half of 2021, I am overjoyed to report that we are in great shape! God continues to guide and provide and has put us on solid ground as we enter into the Fall & Winter.

Despite our overall loss of revenue due to COVID and our typical loss of revenue during the summer, which often leads to past due bills...2021 has been a very different story. As a result of God's provision and guidance, we are experiencing a summer FREE of the burden of delinquent bills. That alone is a PRAISE report! But wait...there's more! Not only are we current on all of our bills...we are two months ahead on our bank loan payments. That results in more of our payment going towards principal rather than interest. But wait...there's still more! God has enabled us to reduce our debt this year by **\$20,598** so far!!!

As we continue down this progressive path God has set us on, I am excited to see what else He has in store. I am encouraged that our commitment to being intentional and aggressive about reducing our debt will continue, which will help to pave the way for God's plan & purpose for Union. As I expressed in my previous article, I have FAITH that we are on the path to eliminate our debt within 5 years. But we know we serve an AWESOME GOD...and His timing is perfect! We just have to continue to trust Him, give thanks and be faithful stewards. Thank you for your continued love, support and commitment here at Union!

"We can make our own plans, but the LORD determines our steps." - Proverbs 16:9

With Love & Gratitude, Tracey S. Caraballo (Church Treasurer)



CREATIVE ARTS CLASS COMING SOON!!

Pablo Picasso once said, "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." It's no surprise, then, that many people around the world use the arts as a means to deal with stress, trauma and unhappiness – or to just find greater peace and meaning in their lives. If you're curious about what art therapy has to offer, I invite you to join me for three classes that will meet:

September 13th | September 20th | September 27th

The classes will be held in **The Green Room** at **6:30PM**.

During these classes you will experience projects that can help nurse your mind, body and soul, find ways to relax, help you deal with the bad stuff in your life and simply getting in touch with yourself and your purpose.

Just some examples will include:

Draw or paint your emotions.

In this exercise, you'll focus entirely on painting what you're feeling.

Attach a drawing or message to a balloon.

Send away negative emotions or spread positive ones by attaching a note or drawing to a balloon and setting it free.

Paint/Draw to music.

Letting your creativity flow in response to music is a great way to let out feelings and just relax.

Design a postcard you will never send.

Are you still angry or upset with someone in your life? Create a postcard that expresses this, though you don't have to ever send it.

Make a drawing related to a Bible verse you like.

Take these words of wisdom and turn them into something visually inspiring.

Incorporate a movie soundtrack to your life.

Using actual movie soundtracks, apply them to your own worries, thoughts and issues.

...and many more

All of this will be a wonderful opportunity for you to use the power of music and art to help you on your life journey. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Pastor Jim Lanier (Creative Arts Pastor)

VOICES OF TRUTH CHOIR

The members of the Voices of Truth choir are getting anxious to resume their Sunday contribution to worship! It's been such a long time and there have been many delays because of...well, you know what!! However, as it stands now, we are planning to resume with our first rehearsal on **September 1st at 7:15PM** in the Choir Room. The hopes are to provide great inspiring music for worship and to begin preparations for a **Christmas Program**. Now if you are not a regular member of the choir, you are still invited to join us in September. All are welcome and no auditions are required.

'WITH A MESSAGE'

*"sometimes words have
two meanings"*
- Robert Plant

In production as we speak is a program coming in February that takes beloved songs from our history that while not written for the church, will always contain inspiring and profound lyrics of encouragement, overcomers, love and hope for all who experience and listen. Using drama and dance incorporated within the music selections, this will undoubtedly be Union's largest production to date!!



Fun in the sun is coming to an end! School is about to start, which means vacations are over and Gatlinburg is in the past, but not forgotten. The nine days of tubing, hiking, small groups and campfires will be remembered by our youth for the rest of their lives. However, the commitments and decisions they made on the mountaintop are up to us as a Youth Ministry to help them live out, grow in their faith, and continue their walk with Christ.

The next few months we will be focusing on four questions with the students:

Who am I?

Every student has their identity in something. We will help students clarify and identify false identities, while helping them find their true identity in Jesus.

Where do I belong?

Every student has felt lonely, but not every student has felt Jesus centered community. We want every student to feel like they are a part of the family at Union...a church that crosses generational, racial, geographical, and socioeconomic gaps to share the love of Christ. Every time we open our doors to a student is an opportunity for them to find a place for them to belong.

What is truth?

Teaching students truth through God's word – not what they hear or see on social media.

Where do I go next?

If a student is not growing in their faith, it's not because they're lazy; they just don't know what the next step is, or where to start. Jesus teaches us in John 15:1-5 that it all starts with a relationship.

Thank you so much for your support and prayers for our Youth Ministry. I want to say a special Thank You to our camp nurse and one of my longest and committed Youth Leaders Leslie Becker...we're praying for you. You and Steve are truly a blessing!

God Bless You! Pastor Eddie Morrison (Youth Pastor)



As the Children's Minister here at Union Church, sometimes what we dream of doing may be impossible to us but to God nothing is impossible. Even though we are still in pandemic mode, with the help and generosity of our Church family, we were able to put on a successful VBS. This originally had to be canceled at the start of this pandemic. I was so happy to see that nothing can stop us from truly being the hands and feet of Jesus when it comes to delivering His Word to children who may have never stepped inside of a church before. Pastor Bill has quoted on many occasions for us to "Preach the gospel and if necessary, use words." Through your gifts, talents, donations and service we brought His Word to life and made a difference in the lives of both the children who attended and the youth who lead. I thank you for this. Children's Ministry is not a one-person job. It takes all of us together to make a difference in a child's life.

Now as school steadily approaches we will be helping not just our church kids but also those in the community who are in need of supplies. Galatians 6:9 says, "Let us not become tired of doing good." With this in mind if you find it in your heart to donate anything to help in our school supply giveaway, I would truly appreciate it. I also look forward to:

The Base Afterschool Program

Ages: 1st Grade Through 5th Grade
3:00PM to 4:45PM | Monday – Thursday
Free of charge!

Thank you for your support, participation but most of all your love. Philippians 4:19, "God will meet all my needs."

Fawn Waterman (Children's Minister)

Church Secretary's Report

Total Full Time Membership:
520

Households Represented:
363

Total Associate Membership:
44

Households Represented:
28

Total Membership:
564

Total Households Represented:
391

(This Report is as of 07/23/21)

We Welcome Our Newest Members

☺ Suanne Root

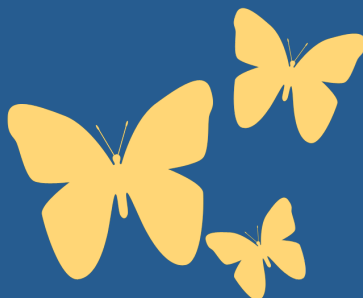
In Deepest Sympathy

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

- † Amanda Watson (July 4th)
- † Cordell Petry (July 4th)
- † Pat Adams (July 4th)
- † Anna Marie Feeney (July 23rd)

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

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



Senior Connections Ministry

is planning to go to Myrtle Beach!

October 14th - October 20th

Single Occupancy: **\$760.00 (Per Person)**

Double Occupancy: **\$ 468.00 (Per Person)**

\$936 Per Couple

This trip to **Beach Cove Resort** includes but is not limited to:
Ocean Front Accommodations (6 Nights) | Round-Trip Baggage
Handling | Transportation (& Gas Cost)

Bible Studies | 3 Different Live Shows | 4 Dinners

**If you are interested in going, or for more information
please call Connie Evers (863) 443-0181.**

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Newsletter

TECH MINISTRY

You can stay connected with us through our church website: weareunion.org. Join us for worship: in-person or by watching our sermons or videos on our church Facebook page:

UnionChurchAP

(Like, Share, & Follow)

Sunday Worship Service Times:

Traditional: 9:00AM | Contemporary: 11:00AM

You can also check us out on our YouTube Channel (make sure to subscribe and click the bell icon to get notified when we go live or upload a video):

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

CD's are available for those who have no access to the Internet. If you would like CD's of the sermons please contact the church office. If you need technical help to get connected to our sites or setting things up call the church office or email me at mbernhard@weareunion.org

To **DONATE** online:

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

♥ Always – Byeeeeeee!

Miranda Bernhard (Production Manager)

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.**