



**Sunday, July 5, 2026**  
**10:00 am Worship Service**  
**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Pentecost**

**Mission Statement: Compelled by God's love and our faith in Jesus Christ, Unity Church, a diverse people of faith, seeks to realize God's dream for the world through worship, learning, giving, and serving.**

**Core Values: We love children. Serve Christ with courage. Embrace diversity. Nurture community. Be an advocate for justice and peace.**

**Vision Statement: We are called to Reach Up, Reach In and Reach Out**

**(302) 658-5288 [UnityChurchELCA@gmail.com](mailto:UnityChurchELCA@gmail.com)**  
**2101 Lancaster Avenue, Wilmington, DE 19805**  
**[www.unitywilmington.org](http://www.unitywilmington.org)**

*We invite you to contact Unity's staff members:*

**The Rev. Brian K. Sanders, Lead Pastor**  
**443-676-2239; [bks0808@aol.com](mailto:bks0808@aol.com)**

**The Rev. Dr. Melissa P. Lemons, Pastor for Community Ministry**  
**[melissalemons@gmail.com](mailto:melissalemons@gmail.com); 302-803-8866**  
**Office hours: by appointment**

**Norwood Coleman, Jr., PhD, Music Director**  
**Mrs. Sharlene Drummond, Choir Director**

**YOU CAN ACCESS US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 9:30AM ON YOUTUBE, UNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, WILMINGTON, DE WITH THE CURRENT SUNDAY DATE. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, USE LINK BELOW.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN4vkddPnbKEzTKIFg-Lkvg>**

### **“Enter to Worship”**

\*Those who are able are invited to stand \*\* **Please, no walking or standing during this time.** **BOLD PRINT:** Congregation responds, P: Presider, A: Assisting Minister/Worship Leader. Where you see a †, you are invited to make the sign of the cross.

## **THE GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

### **PRAISE & WORSHIP**

### **RINGING OF THE BELLS**

#### **Introduction**

**A:** The mystery of God’s ways is sometimes hidden from the wise and intelligent. The prophet describes an everlasting realm that contrasts with earthly nations, one marked by peace, humility, and freedom. Jesus associates with those excluded from the religious community. Like Paul, we struggle with selfish desires; we lament flawed systems; and we seek God’s mercy and forgiveness. We gather around word, water, and meal by Christ’s invitation: “Come to me, all you that are weary.” Here we find rest for our souls and hope for life in beloved community.

### **OPENING HYMN-“JUST A CLOSER WALK WITH THEE” TFF 253**

**Please Stand**

## Just a Closer Walk with Thee

*Refrain*



Just a clos-er walk with thee, grant it, Je-sus, is my plea;



dai - ly walk-ing close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.



- 1 I am weak but thou art strong: Je - sus, keep me from all wrong;
- 2 Through this world of toil and snares, if I fal - ter, Lord, who cares?
- 3 When my fee - ble life is o'er, time for me will be no more;



I'll be sat - is - fied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee.  
Who with me my bur - den shares? None but thee, dear Lord, none but thee.  
guide me gent - ly, safe - ly o'er to thy king - dom shore, to thy shore.

Text: North American traditional

Music: CLOSER WALK, North American traditional

## THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (Please Stand)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, source of hope in every nation, rest for the weary, glory and peace to the ends of the earth.  
**Amen.**

Let us bring every burden to God. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

God of all mercy, **we have sinned against you, our neighbors, and your creation. Within ourselves and our communities, our desire to do what is good is at war with the evil that dwells in us. We lament the evil that holds us captive. We repent of the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Rescue us, forgive us, and restore us for lives of compassion and courage through our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.**

All-merciful, Almighty God forgive you all your sins through the grace of ✝ Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit's power strengthen you in doing what is good. **Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

A or P: You are great, O God, **and greatly to be praised. You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant that we may believe in you, call upon you, know you, and serve you, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## WORD (Please be seated)

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song*

### **First Reading: Zechariah 9:9-12**

<sup>9</sup> Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

<sup>10</sup> He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

<sup>11</sup> As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. <sup>12</sup> Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.

*The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.*

### **Psalm: Psalm 145:8-14(READ RESPONSIVELY)**

<sup>8</sup> The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

<sup>9</sup> **LORD, you are good to all, and your compassion is over all your works.**

<sup>10</sup> All your works shall praise you, O LORD, and your faithful ones shall bless you.

<sup>11</sup> **They shall tell of the glory of your kingdom and speak of your power,**

<sup>12</sup> that all people may know of your power and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

<sup>13</sup> **Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; your dominion endures throughout all ages. You, LORD, are faithful in all your words, and loving in all your works.**

<sup>14</sup> The Lord upholds all those who fall and lifts up those who are bowed down.

## Second Reading: Romans 7:15-25a

<sup>15</sup> I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. <sup>16</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup> But in fact it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that the good does not dwell within me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do the good lies close at hand, but not the ability. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it but sin that dwells within me.

<sup>21</sup> So I find it to be a law that, when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. <sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, <sup>23</sup> but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. <sup>24</sup> Wretched person that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? <sup>25a</sup> Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!  
*The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.***

### \*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Please Stand)



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## GOSPEL

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to: **Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30**

**C:** **Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **Gospel:**

[Jesus spoke to the crowd saying:] <sup>16</sup>“To what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup>‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

<sup>18</sup>“For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; <sup>19</sup>the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

<sup>25</sup>At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; <sup>26</sup>yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. <sup>27</sup>All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup>“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup>Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup>For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you , O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY- “THERE IS A BALM IN GILEAD” ELW 185**

# There Is a Balm in Gilead

*Refrain*



There is a balm in Gil-e - ad to make the wound-ed whole;



there is a balm in Gil-e - ad to heal the sin - sick soul.



- 1 Some - times I feel dis - cour-aged and think my work's in vain,
- 2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you can - not pray like Paul,
- 3 Don't ev - er be dis - cour-aged, for Je - sus is your friend;

*Refrain*



but then the Ho - ly Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.  
you can tell the love of Je - sus and say, "He died for all."  
and if you lack for knowl - edge, he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: BALM IN GILEAD, African American spiritual

## SERMON

PASTOR BRIAN SANDERS

Notes...

### APOSTLES CREED (Please Stand)

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

\*Or, "he descended to the dead," another translation of this text in widespread use.  
From sundaysandseasons.com.

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Please sit, stand or kneel)

A: Trusting in God's steadfast love for all God has made, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation. *A brief silence.*

Gathering God, send your Spirit on the church you have called out from every nation. Knit us together into one body and heal the divisions we have caused. Overcome our timidity to witness and act in the public square when your purpose is being thwarted. Bless rostered and lay leaders with clarity and courage as they center your people in the gospel. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

All your works praise you, O God. From the Arctic to the Caribbean, from the Atlantic to the western islands, these lands and waters have sustained its peoples over many centuries. As we take our part in creation's praise, revive our wonder at what you have fashioned, and enliven our will to ensure its health for future generations. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Holy Trinity, you show us the splendor of diversity and the beauty of unity in your own divine life. We come from many nations with many languages; make us a united people that delights in our many different gifts. As the United States of America marks its declaration of independence, give those whom we have entrusted with authority the spirit of wisdom, and curb every abuse of that trust, so that both here and abroad, justice, humility, and peace may flourish. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You are the Mother of exiles, O God. Extend your arms to all who are tired, who live with poverty, the tempest-tossed, all who yearn to breathe free. Embrace people seeking refuge; those incarcerated, detained, or disappeared; and neighbors fearing those they once trusted. Give healing and hope to people in any oppression and need, especially these we name before you now (*a brief silence*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

We remember before you those who have died in every generation: Jan Hus, executed for protesting the ecclesial system; Benedict, teacher of a prayerful life; and those who have died ensuring the freedoms of this country: people in the armed services, peace officers, advocates, and activists. (*Here specific names may be mentioned.*) Gather us, together with those who have gone before us (*especially*), and with saints of every tribe and nation, into the holy city you have prepared. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your mercy, O God, we entrust our restless hearts and all our cares, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

# MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

## PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always

C: And also with you. Please share a sign of Christ's peace.

## OFFERING

(God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:7, 8)

(During the offering, the ushers will pass the offering plates moving from back to front while a musical selection is played. Then the congregation will sing the Offering hymn printed below.)



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me.  
Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take not your  
Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -  
store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up -  
hold me with your free Spir - it.  
Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -  
new a right spir - it with - in me.

## OFFERING PRAYER

A: Blessed are you, O God, for waves of grain and harvesters, fruitful vines and winepresses, for our labor and our rest, for the gifts of your hand in this land. Transform us and what we offer into the banquet of your compassion, serving your love without limits through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

*All are welcome to communion*

P: The Lord be with you

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. We remember and proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us,

full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in Christ's death and resurrection. We look with hope for the Lord's coming and ask... **Come, Lord Jesus. Come Holy Spirit. Amen**

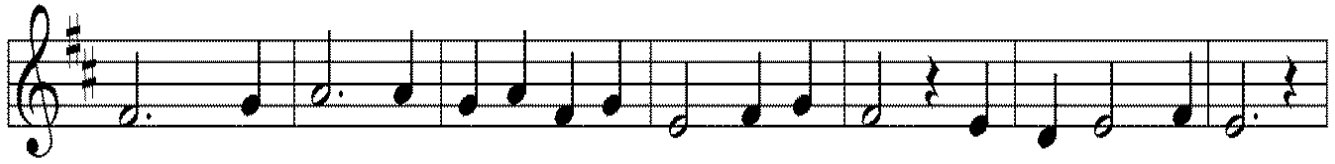
## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**P:** Gathered as one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:  
(*Alternate/modern versions of prayer in This Far by Faith p. 3, WOV p. 39*)

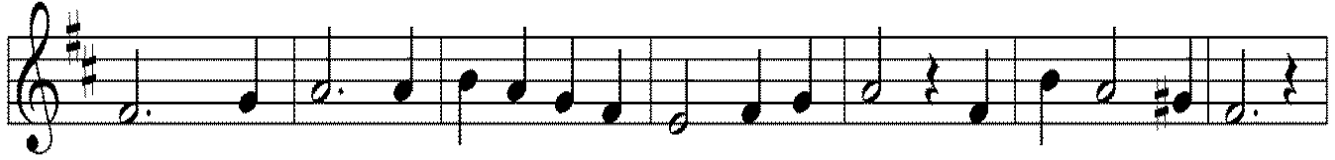
**C:** Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

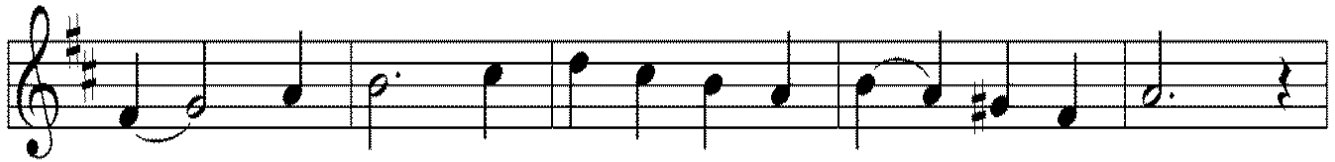
**P:** Citizens of the commonwealth of heaven:  
Taste and know that God is good to all.



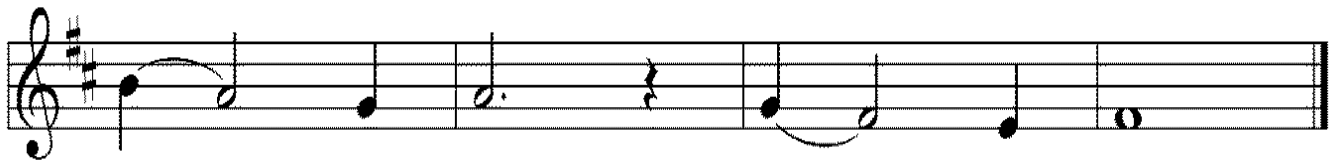
**♩** Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We thank you, God of heaven and earth, **that you fill our deepest need with the very gift of Jesus Christ, broken and poured out for us. Pour us out into a broken world. Channel our common life toward the common good, following the way our Savior leads us now and forever. Amen**

### THE SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us to minister to the world.*

## **BLESSING**

P: The Author of life, the Word of salvation, the Breath of new birth,  
✝ one God, bless you and equip you for living and serving, today and every day. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN– “BATTLE HYMN OF REPUBLIC” TFF 297**

**Please Stand**

## Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory



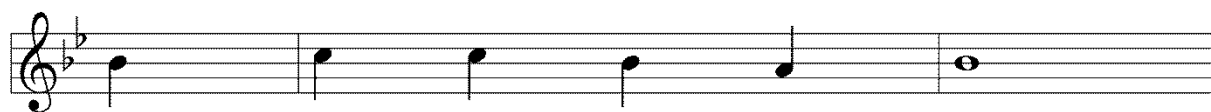
1 Mine eyes have seen the glo - ry of the com - ing of the Lord;  
2 He has sound - ed forth the trum - pet that shall nev - er call re - treat;  
3 In the beau - ty of the lil - ies Christ was born a - cross the sea,



he is tram - pling out the vin - tage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
he is sift - ing out the hearts of men be - fore his judg - ment seat.  
with a glo - ry in his bo - som that trans - fig - ures you and me.

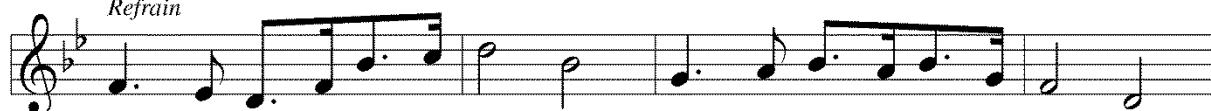


he has loosed the fate - ful light - ning of his ter - ri - ble swift sword:  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to an - swer him; be ju - bi - lant, my feet!  
As he died to make men ho - ly, let us live to make men free,

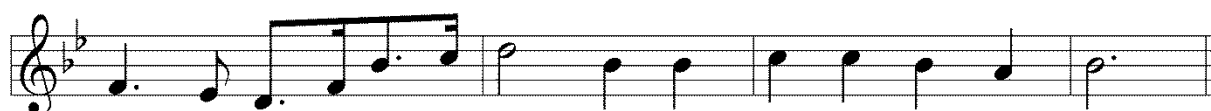


his truth is march - ing on.  
Our God is march - ing on.  
while God is march - ing on.

### *Refrain*



Glo - ry, glo - ry! Hal - le - lu - jah! Glo - ry, glo - ry! Hal - le - lu - jah!



Glo - ry, glo - ry! Hal - le - lu - jah! His truth is march - ing on.

Text: Julia Ward Howe, 1819-1910  
Music: BATTLE HYMN, American, 19th cent.

## DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Seek liberty and justice for all.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**“Let us exit to serve”**

*We are called to reach up, reach in, and reach out.....*

**IF YOU HAVE ANYONE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THE PRAYER LIST, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE @ 302-658-5288. NAMES WILL REMAIN ON THE PRAYER LIST FOR 3 MONTHS, UNLESS YOU REQUEST LONGER. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE to MAKE ADDITIONS – (302) 658-5288.**

**THIS WEEK WE ASK THAT YOU KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:**

<b>UNITY CHURCH</b>	<b>PASTOR BRIAN SANDERS</b>
<b>HARRY WILLIAMS</b>	<b>PASTOR CLARENCE PETTIT</b>
<b>REV. LORRAINE</b>	<b>RUTH JOE</b>
<b>FRAN RODRIQUEZ</b>	<b>CAROL EGAN</b>
<b>JOAN MILLER</b>	<b>AL SHOLLENBERGER</b>
<b>JAMES SPAMER</b>	<b>HARRY WILLIAMS</b>
<b>ROBERT OLIVER</b>	<b>TANYA BIRCH</b>
<b>DONA RODRIGUES AND SON DANIEL</b>	
<b>ALICE COLEMAN</b>	<b>MICHAEL JACKSON</b>
<b>CURTIS &amp; MICHELE JACKSON</b>	
<b>MARY ELLEN BANE</b>	

**ANNOUNCEMENTS – Birthdays, Anniversaries, Visitors**  
**WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME ALL VISITORS TO UNITY THIS MORNING.**  
**IT IS SO GOOD TO HAVE YOU AND PLEASE COME AGAIN.**

**PUB THEOLOGY** – is held on the third Sunday of each month. We meet in the Weiser Room and hold a lively discussion centering around everyday life. It is quite interesting and everyone is invited is invited

to attend. In July, we will meet on Sunday, July 19, 2026, immediately following morning worship. Please join us!

**ALL CHILDREN'S GRADUATIONS** will be celebrated going from one grade to the next on July 12<sup>th</sup>. There is a sign-up sheet at the back of the church for the adult's name, child's name, relationship, age and grade. Please register your child for recognition on July 12<sup>th</sup>. Also, we have a sign-up sheet for donations of food and other items to be used for the celebration.

**WE HAVE A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY** to see the performance "Joshua" in Lancaster on Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. The cost for transportation and ticket to the show will be \$154. Show time is 11:00 am. Terry Hawkins is in charge and would like to know as soon as possible how many will be going. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Terry. **TICKETS ARE GOING FAST! SIGN UP TODAY!**

**SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR/FELLOWSHIP** is held in the Narthex immediately following morning worship and all are invited to attend. During the summer month, we will suspend our Coffee Hour (except for special days) and will resume in the fall. If anyone is interested in hosting one Sunday, please contact Rev. Lorraine @ (302) 383-9755.

**PRIVATE PRAYERS** – If you would like extra prayer time, you are welcome to stay at the altar after you have had communion.

**Dementia Caregiver Support Group:** 2nd Thursday of the month, 6-7:30pm. Contact Rev. Brain Sanders for more info.

**Prayer:** Anyone interested in 30 minutes of presenting prayer leads is invited to join our Prayer Line every Monday evening at 6:30-7:00 pm. Dial 1-240-591-0390, 315-704#.

**Volunteers needed:** Readers (lectors), Assisting Ministers (Worship leaders), Communion Assistants and Altar Guild. Please consider helping out in this capacity. Also, we need a volunteer liaison for the Boy Scouts to replace Bob Mazzoni. See Carol Egan for more info.

**Council Vacancies:** There are several open positions on Unity Church Council – volunteers needed to oversee Education, Hospitality, and Stewardship Committees; as well as anyone with accounting or bookkeeping skills to assist the Treasurer. See Rob Snowden or Pastor Sanders.

**Offering/Giving:** An alternative way to contribute to Unity is to set up VANCO on your mobile phone by texting (844)794-0738 and follow directions to donate by credit card. There is a “donate now” button on our Website which is [www.unitywilmington.org](http://www.unitywilmington.org)

**Spiritual Direction/Companionship:** If you’d like to talk individually about your faith life and how God shows up for you, contact Pr. Melissa. Sessions are free for Unity members (normally \$50 per hour). Companions usually meet once a month.

**Bible Study** is held every Wednesday evening at 7:00 via Zoom. Please access Zoom as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87206052414?pwd=cWxnSnJodFE5S3hObzQrVGdMWGwwUT09>

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,87206052414#.....0#,,717690# US (Wash, DC)

**Meeting ID: 872 0605 2414**

**Passcode: 717690**