

The Union Baptist Church Newsletter

Reverend Dr. Orlando B. Yates, Senior Pastor



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Winter 2026

A Meditation for You from Our Pastor

A Message of HOPE

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16 KJV

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

At this special time of the year, I wish to extend to each of you and your families peace and hope at Christmas and a blessed New Year and beyond. I pray for strength, love, and the joy that surpasses all understanding (Philippians 4:7). May the Lord order all your steps with His Word and help you to walk in obedience and love.

We have come to the end of a particularly challenging year, but the light of Christ still shines amid the darkness of this world but thank God the darkness has not overcome his light. For **John 8:12** declares, *"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."* This is the real reason for our joy as we are preparing to celebrate Christmas. For many of us, Christmas may be different this year because someone may be missing that we loved so much. But we can still rejoice because Christmas is not about the Christmas tree, gifts, or even family gatherings, it is all about the birth of our Messiah, Jesus the Christ.

Here are some reasons to celebrate:

1. Jesus was born because of **mankind's sin but He did not quit or give up on us.**
2. Jesus was born because God wanted to **reveal His own character to humanity.**
3. Jesus was born to **remove the sins of humankind through a perfect sacrifice.**
4. Jesus was born for **humanity to have a Mediator.**
5. Jesus was born to **provide the promised Seed of Abraham.**
6. Jesus was born for God to **make His Spirit available to all humankind.**
7. Jesus was born for God to **redeem humanity.**

We can rejoice because as the Godman, Jesus knows everything that we go through. Every pain we have ever felt, he has also felt! So, he knows how much we can bear! Therefore, we must learn to trust Him in all things. We must learn to trust in his divine will for us.

Last Christmas, none of us could have imagined what this year would bring, especially in our government and beyond, but we can see the hand of God at work in our lives, especially in times of trial.

Mary and Joseph had to trust God completely when they made the long trek to Bethlehem and then again when they had to flee into Egypt. Ask God to help us trust Him as they did. Let prayer and the Word of God lead you. Pray for more love, caring and acceptance of other people. Pray for laborers to minister to needs and pray for people and their needs. Be good witnesses for Christ! Like the Prophet Isaiah, let us respond, If the Lords needs somebody, here am I, send me, I'll go.

May we be people of faith and joy who rejoice in the light and hope that Christmas brings and the blessed opportunities that the New Year offers. The light of Christ truly does shine in a world full of darkness, of wars, of political discord, of so much evil and this light must penetrate our hearts and actions. We are called to be the light of Jesus, to carry the light into a lost world that so desperately needs it. *(Selected)*



Worship Services and Christian Education

Sunday at 8:30 a.m. - Worship service on Spectrum Cable TV (Channel 8) and on Cincinnati Bell Fioptics TV (Channel 850).

Sunday at 9:30 am to 10:20 am - Sunday Bible Church School (In person/meets in Sanctuary).

Sunday at 9:30 am to 10:20 am - New Members Class (In person/ meets in the first-floor classroom).

Sunday at 10:45 a.m. - In-Person and Livestream Worship Service on YouTube and Facebook.

Tuesday at 6:30 a.m. - You are invited to join us for meditation and online prayer via Zoom. (Zoom ID: 845 3234 7314; Passcode: 208170). Prayer Band Ministry

Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. - Weekly "Call-Em-All" devotional message from Pastor Yates.

Tuesday at 7:15 p.m.- 8:30 p.m. Men's Bible Study and Fellowship. Pastor Yates is the Lead Teacher.

Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. - Word Wednesday Bible Study (Facebook Live) led by Pastor Yates on the business page of UBC Facebook and UBC YouTube channel.

Saturday at 8:00 a.m. - UBC Radio Broadcast (WCVG 1320). The UBC Radio Broadcast is also available to stream online at the following link:
<https://www.radio.net/s/wcvg>

Saturday at 1:00 p.m. - Saturday Church School Bible Study. The class is held via phone call-in: 1-267-807-9605 (code 344097). The teacher is Sis. Faye Shirley



BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS TO EVERYONE BORN IN THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

REPORTING ILLNESSES, SURGERIES AND BEREAVEMENT INFORMATION: Please contact the church office if you or a loved one is sick or entering the hospital so that your Family Ward Deacon and Pastor Yates may be notified. Please also contact the office if you or a loved one is being released from the hospital or if there is bereavement in your family. The church office phone number is **(513) 381-3858, ext. 3**.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER MINISTRY: Please continue to keep in prayer our UBC members in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, hospitals and at home. Please also continue to pray for all of the bereaved families at Union and bereaved families all over the world.

UBC WEBSITE - GIVING: There are two methods of giving on the website: *Tithely and Givelify*. **Please visit the website and click on the “Give” tab for more information and check out the video** at www.union-baptist.net. Thank you.

EMAIL ADDRESS REMINDER: In addition to church newsletters and call-em-all messages, you can also receive emails to stay informed with other UBC updates. You can call and leave your email address at the church voicemail box at 513-852-1638 or email to Public Relations Ministry at publicity@union-baptist.net. God Bless!

MEN’S MINISTRY BIBLE CLASS: There will be a recess for the Men’s Bible Class on Tuesday beginning **December 2, 2025**. The class will resume on Tuesday, **February 10, 2026 at 7:15 p.m.** with a new Bible series to be announced. All men are encouraged to be in attendance. Pastor Yates is the lead teacher

WORD WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY: The last class session of Word Wednesday Bible Study will occur on **Wednesday, December 17, 2025** before winter break. Word Wednesday Bible Study Facebook Live and on YouTube classes will resume on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.** Pastor Yates is the Lead Instructor.

ANNUAL FAMILY COMMUNION: Annual Family Communion will be observed on the **first Sunday in December** on **December 7, 2025** at the 10:45 a.m. worship celebration. Families are asked to come and sit together as much as possible. Family members are also asked to give a sacrificial Family Communion offering above your tithes and offering.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PROGRAM: HONORING VETERANS

The **Historic Union Baptist** and **Historic United Colored American** Cemeteries will once again be participating in the Wreaths Across America Program, a cherished tradition dedicated to honoring veterans.

This event is made possible thanks to the generous support of Union and the wider community.

The ceremony will take place on **Saturday, December 13, 2025**, beginning nationwide at Noon. Participants are asked to **arrive by 11:45 a.m.** The program will conclude by 12:30 p.m.

We are in urgent need of volunteers from the community and the faith community to assist with placing wreaths on the graves of veterans. Your help will ensure that each veteran receives the recognition they deserve.

This event is a tremendous blessing for the community, providing an opportunity for fellowship, remembrance, and reflection. Attendees are encouraged to join us, take photographs, and enjoy the company of fellow participants. The media has been invited to help share the significance of this event with the broader community.

Historic Union Baptist Cemetery is located at 4933 Cleves Warsaw Pike Cincinnati, OH 45238 and **Historic United Colored American Cemetery** is located at Duck Creek Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45227.

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA PROGRAM: HONORING VETERANS (CONTINUED)

Thank you in advance for the generosity and dedication of everyone who contributed their time, donations, and ongoing support for this meaningful initiative. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all involved. Your commitment ensures that we continue to honor the memory and sacrifices of our veterans, preserving their legacy within our community for future generations. **Organizers: Sis. Dorene Dillard, Sis. Lisa Adams, and Sis. Louise Stevenson**

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The Annual Children and Youth Ministry Christmas Program will be held on **Sunday, December 21, 2025**, from **9:30 am to 10:30 am in the sanctuary** sponsored by the Sunday School of Union and under the leadership of **Dr. Raven Spratley**, Ministry Leader and **Bro. Richard Spratley**, Assistant Ministry Leader; and assisted by the Music and Drama Ministries. Treats will be passed out after the 10:45 a.m. Special Christmas Day Worship Celebration by the Sunday School Leadership, **Deacon Ernest Norman** and **Deacon Donald Darby**.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH REDEDICATION

The Children and Youth Rededication will occur on the fourth Sunday in December on **December 28, 2025** during the 10:45 a.m. Worship Celebration. **Reverend Alvin Wyatt**, Associate Minister, will be bringing the message.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY - 2026



The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center will honor the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with the **21st annual King Legacy Celebration on Monday, January 19, 2026**. The King Legacy Celebration includes a continental breakfast and time for fellowship before the program begins. Doors open at 7:30 a.m., with performances and the keynote presentation starting at 8:30 a.m. (UBC has an ad in the MLK souvenir booklet).

For additional information and ticket information, contact <https://www.mlkcoalition.org/>

To mark Cincinnati's 51st MLK Day March and Program, the **2026 theme is "Bending the Arc Toward Justice"**. The keynote speaker is nationally recognized UC professor **Dr. Holly McGee**. Holly Y. McGee specializes in U.S. History and African American History, with an emphasis on black women's activist and intellectual history, comparative political activism in the United States and South Africa, and popular culture in the twentieth century.

The **Commemorative March starts at 10:30 a.m.** from the National Underground Freedom Center and the **Annual Program at Music Hall starts at 12:00 p.m.**

UPCOMING BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT AT UBC

Continuing an important tradition, **Dr. Holly McGee** and the African Studies Department at the University of Cincinnati will once again join us at Union Baptist Church for morning worship, followed by a tour of Historic Union Baptist Cemetery on February 8, 2026. This special event offers a unique opportunity to honor Black history and foster stronger community connections through education and reflection.

In addition to the main event, Dr. McGee will be leading a **Black History Series on Tuesdays at 6:00 PM** at the church throughout February. Participants will also enjoy snacks during these sessions.

~~Submitted by **Sis. Louise Stevenson**

THANK YOU: To the Women's Laity Day Committee, my Union Family and Pastor Yates: "I am very grateful because you are very thoughtful". I give all the glory to my God because I am only His vessel. I can do all things through Christ who gives me the strength. Love you all, **Sister Laura E. Thompson**

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

THANK YOU: Dear Church Family, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the outpouring of kindness and support you have shown me during two especially difficult times. The unexpected loss of my sweet sister-in-law, Angela Rene' Jackson, was painful, but your prayers, expressions of sympathy, and acts of kindness were very comforting and most appreciated.

I am also grateful for your encouragement and generosity during the recent government shutdown. The uncertainty was truly overwhelming, but your words of encouragement, thoughtful gestures, and most of all your prayers, helped me navigate through those days.

I am truly blessed to be part of such a loving church family and I pray that God continues to bless each of you as you have blessed me. Blessings, **Sister Greta Jackson**

A RECAP OF FALL AT UBC

Annual Thanksgiving Day Parade

It was truly a historic day for Union Baptist Church to be invited to participate in the **33rd Annual Community Celebration**, in light of the fact the Historic Union Baptist Cemetery has been a very real part of the Price Hill Community, since it's purchase of 16 acres of land in **1864** for African American burials **under the Pastoral Leadership of the late Reverend William P. Newman**.

Our group embraced the spirit of celebration by participating enthusiastically in the Annual Price Hill Parade this year. Fourteen of our members proudly marched together, carrying a beautifully crafted banner. As we made our way along the parade route, we distributed Crackerjacks and bubble gum, spreading joy and delight among the parade-goers. We are especially grateful to everyone who participated, and we offer a heartfelt "hallelujah" to **Pastor Yates** for generously providing the Crackerjacks, creating our banner, and coming out to cheer us on. Our sincere thanks also go to **Joe Pokorney** of Calliditas Construction Company for his sponsorship this year.

Looking ahead, we are excited to announce that our new **Parade Committee for 2026** has been formed. The committee will include **Dr. Spratley, Sis. Annette Bell, Sis. Angelita Jones, and Bro. Rodney Delaine**. If you are interested in joining this project and helping to continue this tradition, please let us know. **Article Submitted by Sis. Louise Stevenson.** (Pictures submitted by Pastor Yates and Sis. Stevenson)



INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

A RECAP OF FALL AT UBC (Continued)

Trick or Trunk



On behalf of the Children's Ministry, we'd like to thank all members of Union and friends for supporting our annual Trunk or Treat Harvest party, which was held for the children of our church and community back on Sunday, November 2, 2025. Due to your generosity and support, we were able to put smiles on the faces of many children, youth and their families in our community with games, food, prayers, hugs and, of course, treats and candy! Pictures were posted out on our church's Facebook page earlier in November, if you want to go out and peruse those photos. A special congratulations is extended to **Bro. Robert and Sis. Kim Young**, who were our winners this year on the best Harvest dressed trunk! We look forward to making this event bigger and better for 2026. **Submitted by Bro. Jeremy Yates on behalf of Dr. Raven Spratley, Children's Ministry Leader**

2025 CEG Excellence Awards Gala and Fundraiser

Congratulations to Union's own **Sis. Angelita Jones** and other notable honorees on being honored at the 2025 Collective Empowerment Group (CEG) Business Excellence Awards, Gala and Fundraiser on Saturday, October 25, 2025.



Union Baptist Sends A Heartfelt Congratulations To Sis. Terra Strong Lyons



Sis. Terra Strong Lyons is a former member of Union Baptist Church. She is an actress, a singer and a dancer. Sis. Lyons recently had a guest star role in FBI on CBS and will guest star in 911 Nashville, where she has been offered a re-occurring role. She also has a guest star role in Law and Order: Special Victims Unit (SVU). In addition, she is currently rehearsing for a Community Theatre production in Nashville that opens a few days before Christmas.

Sis. Lyons resides in Nashville Tennessee with her husband and two children. **She is the daughter of Dr. Carolyn Turner.**

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

MINISTRY UPDATES

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Greetings Union,

The winter quarter session for our adult class starts on **December 7, 2025 at 9:30am**. We hope that you will join us for our spirit led class time of Bible study. **Reverend Alvin Wyatt** continues to be our lead teacher, with **Reverend Michael Darden**, and myself as assistant teachers.

Sis. Faye Shirley continues with her Saturday class via call-in instruction.

Starting shortly, **Dea. Darrell Phillips** will be leading a class for our teens. I continue to ask parents to let me know if you want your children to attend classes. We will make every effort to provide instructors.

I look forward to seeing you in class during our Winter session.

Blessings,

Deacon Ernest Norman
Superintendent

GREATER CINCINNATI FOUNDATION GRANT

We are pleased to announce the successful completion of the \$19,000 environmental grant from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation. With these funds, we were able to make essential safety upgrades at Historic Union Baptist Cemetery.

We extend special thanks to **Dr. Spratley** for her leadership throughout the project, as well as to **Bro. Spratley, Bro. Holt**, and the many volunteers who dedicated their time and effort during our numerous clean-up days. **Submitted by Sis. Louise Stevenson**

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Updates for the Health and Wellness Ministry

- There will be no "Go Red" Sunday planned in February 2026.
- There will be no "Think Pink" Sunday planned in October 2026.
- There will be a **Health and Wellness Ministry 30 Year Red and Pink Book Scholarship Fundraiser Luncheon, Saturday, July 11, 2026**. There will be a Time and Place along with Guest Speakers, Heart and Breast Cancer Testimonials, and Book Scholarship Recipient Announcement.
- **Every Second Sunday of the Month**: Blood Pressure Checks, Meatless Monday recipes and Tips to take better care of yours and your family health. **Submitted by Sis. Annette Bell**

ADVENT SEASON

The **four Sundays of Advent in 2025** are: **November 30, December 7, December 14, and December 21**. The Advent season begins on the first Sunday, November 30, and the fourth and final Sunday is December 21, followed by Christmas Eve on December 24, 2025.

The **four themes of Advent** are **hope, peace, joy, and love**. These themes are typically focused on during each of the four weeks of Advent, with each week corresponding to one theme to prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas. **(AI**



Overview)

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

December is Advent Season



WORSHIP CELEBRATION AND ANNUAL FAMILY OBSERVANCE OF HOLY COMMUNION:

Sunday, December 7, 2025, In-Person and Livestream on YouTube and Facebook Live at 10:45 a.m.

WORSHIP CELEBRATION AND SPECIAL RENEWAL OF WEDDING VOWS: Sunday, December 14, 2025, In-Person and Livestream on YouTube and Facebook Live at 10:45 a.m.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AT 9:30 A.M. AND SPECIAL CHRISTMAS WORSHIP CELEBRATION: Sunday, December 21, 2025, In-person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED: December 20, 2025 - January 3, 2026.

WORSHIP CELEBRATION AND CHILDREN AND YOUTH REDEDICATION: Sunday, December 28, 2025, In-person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

WATCH NIGHT OBSERVANCE AT HOME WITH FAMILY: Be in prayer at midnight on **Wednesday, December 31, 2025.**

A PRAYER FOR DECEMBER



Heavenly Father, during this Christmas season, we celebrate Your boundless love reflected in the gift of Your Son. May our hearts be filled with gratitude and compassion as we share Your love with those around us. In this blessed time, let Your divine presence guide and uplift our spirits.

~~~*Anonymous, Guideposts Devotional*

### **January is Worshiping Jesus Christ, Only, Always!**

**HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE OBSERVED ON THE FIRST SUNDAY IN JANUARY AND SPECIAL REDEDICATION OF CHURCH LEADERS AND MEMBERS:** Sunday, January 4, 2026, In-Person and Live-Stream on YouTube and Facebook at 10:45 a.m.



**WORSHIP CELEBRATION:** Sunday, January 11, 2026, In-Person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

**WORSHIP CELEBRATION:** Sunday, January 18, 2026, In-Person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

**CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED:** Monday, January 19, 2026 (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Observance)

**WORSHIP CELEBRATION:** Sunday, January 25, 2026, In-Person and Livestream on Facebook Live and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

**FIRST QUARTER CHURCH CONFERENCE:** January 30, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the Church Sanctuary

#### **A PRAYER FOR JANUARY**

Loving Creator, as we welcome the dawn of a New Year, we are grateful for Your love and grace. We thank You for the gift of time, allowing us to make amends and pursue our dreams. Guide our hearts and renew our minds as we embark on new paths and move forward in faith with courage, strength, and love guiding our actions.

~~~*Anonymous, Guideposts*

INFORMATION & ANNOUNCEMENTS (CONTINUED)

February is Black History Month

HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE OBSERVED ON THE FIRST SUNDAY IN FEBRUARY: February 1, 2026 In-Person and Live-Stream on YouTube and Facebook at 10:45 a.m.

UBC AFRICAN HERITAGE OBSERVANCE AND WORSHIP CELEBRATION WITH WEARING OF AFRO-CENTRIC CLOTHING AND GUESTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI: Sunday, February 8, 2026, In-Person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

WORSHIP CELEBRATION: Sunday, February 15, 2026, In-Person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED: Monday, February 16, 2026, Presidents' Day Observance

WORSHIP CELEBRATION: Sunday, February 22, 2026, In-Person and Livestream on Facebook and YouTube at 10:45 a.m.

A Prayer for February

Our Heavenly Father,
In this Short month
Of long winter days,
Guide me to focus
On my blessings.
Place in my heart
a desire, to please You
and fill my mind
with thoughts of
Your love.

~~~ Anonymous, Guideposts Devotional



Black History Month was created in 1926 in the United States, when historian Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History announced the second week of February to be "**Negro History Week**". This week was chosen because it coincided with the birthday of Abraham Lincoln on February 12 and that of Frederick Douglass on February 14, both of which Black communities had celebrated since the late 19th century. Initially lasting a week before becoming a month-long observation since 1970. It is celebrated in February in the United States and Canada, where it has received official recognition from governments, and more recently has also been celebrated in Ireland and the United Kingdom where it is observed in October. *Wikipedia*

Union Baptist Church of Cincinnati Website

For more information about historic Union Baptist Church, please visit our website (www.union-baptist.net) which is **both informative and interactive** for those who are seeking the Will of God in their lives.

On our website, you will see upcoming events; evangelistic missions inclusive for men, women and children; discipleship opportunities for building God's kingdom; exploratory devotional links for personal spiritual growth; and, community connections that have demonstrated, in the past, and continue to demonstrate, the **POWER OF GOD** throughout the Greater Cincinnati area, and historically beyond.

UBC's newsletter is also posted on the website in color.

