



NOVEMBER 2025

# The Union Press

“To know Him and make Him known”

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

## Did Jesus Die for Everyone?

Without question, the most well-known verse in all the Bible is John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”

When I was a new believer, this verse troubled me. I found myself asking questions like:

- When John says that God loved the world, does he mean the earth itself or the people living on it?
- What about those who do not believe in Jesus—does God love them even though they are condemned to hell?
- If God is loving, does that mean everyone will eventually be saved, no matter what they believe about Jesus?
- If God loved the world enough to send His Son to die for our sins, does this mean Jesus simply made salvation possible, leaving us to make it effective by believing?

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**REMINDER:**  
**Deadline for Newsletter**  
**Articles Is Nov. 23<sup>th</sup>.**

Perhaps you’ve wrestled with some of these same questions. This month, as we step back into the time of the Reformation, we continue our look at the Synod of Dort and examine the second article of the *Remonstrance*, which addressed this very question: “**Did Jesus die for everyone?**”

### The Remonstrance: Unlimited Atonement

The *Remonstrance* answered this question as follows: “Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, died for all men and for each man. He earned for them all, through the death of the cross, reconciliation and the forgiveness of sins. Still, Christ died in such a way that no one actually shares in this forgiveness of sins except those who believe.”

This appeal to verses like John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2 seems, at first, to affirm God’s universal love and Christ’s universal provision for sin. Yet, there are several concerning points in this explanation.

First, while the *Remonstrance* claims that Christ died for all people, it also admits that not all are saved. As Dr. Robert Godfrey explains, “*the effectiveness of the death of Christ is triggered by believing, yet this relationship between the work of Christ and the believing of an individual is never explained.*” This suggests that the work of Christ on the cross is only partially sufficient for salvation, requiring something from us to make it effective.

Another issue arises when we consider unbelief itself. If Christ died for the sins of all people, did He also die for the sin of unbelief in those who never believe? The Puritan theologian John Owen raised this important point. Scripture clearly teaches that unbelief is sin. Just two verses after John 3:16, we read:

“Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” – John 3:18

(Continued on Page 2)

- “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” – John 6:29
- “For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.” – Romans 14:23
- “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God.” – Hebrews 3:12

Owen concluded, “If Christ died for the sin of unbelief, then the unbeliever is saved. If unbelief is not a sin, then God cannot condemn the unbeliever for it.” The logic of the *Remonstrance*, therefore, leads to a troubling conclusion—universalism.

### The Synod of Dort: Particular Atonement

In response, the Synod of Dort presented a biblical defense of **Particular Atonement** (also called *Limited Atonement*). It taught that God indeed loved the peoples of the world and gave His Son, Jesus Christ, who effectively redeems from among them all those whom He had chosen from eternity for salvation.

Christ’s death was sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world, but it was God’s will that it should effectively redeem only those who were chosen and given to Christ by the Father.

Consider these passages:

- “She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” – Matthew 1:21 (*note Jesus saves a particular people, “his people”*)
- “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.” – John 6:37–40
- “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” – John 10:11 (*note Jesus does not lay down his life for goats*)
- “Care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” – Acts 20:28 (*also see Ephesians 5:25*)
- “He chose us in him before the foundation of the world.” – Ephesians 1:4

The point is clear: **Christ did not die merely to make salvation possible. He died to make salvation certain.** His work on the cross truly reconciles sinners to God. As Charles Spurgeon beautifully put it: “*We say Christ so died that he infallibly secured the salvation of a multitude that no man can number—who, through Christ’s death, not only may be saved, but are saved, must be saved, and cannot possibly be anything but saved.*”

### Why This Matters Today

The doctrine of Particular Atonement remains vital for Christians today, especially as it shapes our understanding of discipleship, evangelism, and assurance.

#### Discipleship

Jesus calls us to take up our cross daily and follow Him. The doctrine of Particular Atonement teaches us that His death truly saves us—from sin, from the world, from the flesh, and from the devil—and reconciles us to God.

As the Apostle Peter writes:

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” – 1 Peter 2:24

Christ’s atoning work gives us new life. Like one rescued from near death, we are now compelled to live life to the fullest—not for ourselves, but for the One who loved us and gave Himself for us.

#### Evangelism

Some wonder, “If God has chosen His elect and Christ died for them, why should we evangelize? Why should I pray for the lost?”

The answer is simple: **because we do not know who the elect are** and we still believe that Jesus's words are true that, *"Whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."* Therefore, we pray for the lost, we speak of God's mercy, and we live as witnesses of His grace. We proclaim Christ to all so that His sheep may hear His voice and come to Him. We evangelize not in uncertainty, but in confidence that God's Word will not return void.

### **Gospel Assurance**

Finally, this doctrine assures believers of God's steadfast love. Who opened your ears to hear the good news? Who gave you faith to believe? Who sustains you through trials and comforts you in despair? It is all God's grace.

If God began this good work in you, He will surely complete it. His love has guided you from eternity past, redeemed you through Christ's death, and holds you fast in every storm. That same love will bring you safely home to glory.

Truly, God so loved us—and loves us still—that He sent His only begotten Son into this world to be our sufficient Savior. And He remains the Savior of all who believe in Him.



## **Movie Night**



### **CHILDREN'S CHOIR**

**"Worship the Lord with gladness: come before Him with joyful songs." - Psalm 100:1**

Calling all children! We need children to come sing for the Christmas season. We will practice in the sanctuary after fellowship on Sunday, November 23, 30; December 7 and 14. Signup sheets are posted on the "Serve" board. Please contact Debbie Hash (717-413-8728) with any questions.

### **ADULT CHOIR**

**"Praise the Lord, all you nations, extol Him, all you peoples... for great is His love toward us and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord." - Psalm 117:1**

Please pray about joining Union's Choir this Christmas season! Practices will begin November 30 following fellowship, with an additional practice on December 7, and a performance in the worship service on December 14. If interested, sign up on the "Serve" board, and contact Debbie Hash (717-413-8728) to be given music, and YouTube link. Praise the Lord!

### **CHURCH DECORATING FOR ADVENT**

We will be decorating the church for the Advent/Christmas season on Saturday, November 29 at 9:00 am. All are welcome to come and help.

### **ADVENT WREATH DECORATING**

On Sunday, November 30 we will be holding a UPC family event where we will be ringing in the Advent season by making Advent wreaths. We will meet in the gym after worship. A light lunch will be provided. We are asking families to sign up in advance, so we have enough materials. The limit is one wreath per family. You can sign up on the Community Board in the entryway. Please speak with Elaine Swinehart, if you have any questions.

## **Pastor Appreciation**

Dear UPC Family, Thank you for the outpouring of love, gratitude, and generosity you've shown to me and my family during Pastor Appreciation Month. Your cards, kind words, and gifts deeply encouraged us. I am truly grateful for each of you and count it a joy and privilege to serve as your pastor. May the Lord make his face shine upon us as we seek Him together. ~In Christ's love, Jeremy

# NOVEMBER

2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						<b>1</b> <i>All Saints' Day</i>
<b>2</b> 8:30 Prayer Mtg. 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship – Memorial Sunday 5:00 Prayer Service @Middle Octorara	<b>3</b> 7:00 Trustee Mtg  Octorara Pines Growth Group	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10:00 Prayer Mtg.  Union Growth Group	<b>6</b> 1:00 Deacon Mtg  Quarryville Growth Group	<b>7</b>  Kirkwood Growth Group	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> 8:30 Prayer Mtg. 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	<b>10</b> 1:00 Circle Mtg.  Octorara Pines Growth Group	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 10:00 Prayer Mtg.  Union Growth Group	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Kirkwood Growth Group  6:00 Family Night	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> 8:30 Prayer Mtg. 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	<b>17</b>  Octorara Pines Growth Group	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 10:00 Prayer Mtg. 7:00 Session Mtg  Union Growth Group	<b>20</b>  Quarryville Growth Group	<b>21</b>  Kirkwood Growth Group	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 8:30 Prayer Mtg. 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Children's Choir Practices	<b>24</b>  Octorara Pines Growth Group	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 10:00 Prayer Mtg.  NO Union Growth Group	<b>27</b>  <i>Thanksgiving</i>	<b>28</b>  Kirkwood Growth Group	<b>29</b> 9:00 Advent/ Christmas Decorating 10:00 UPW Mtg
<b>30</b> 8:30 Prayer Mtg. 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship <i>Advent Begins</i> Adult & Children's Choir Practices Advent Wreath Decorating						

# LECTIONARY PASSAGES

## November 2nd – 31<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4; Psalm 119:137-144;  
2 Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12; Luke 19:1-10

## November 9th – 32<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Haggai 1:15b-2:9; Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21;  
2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38

## November 16th – 33<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 65:17-25; Isaiah 12;  
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; Luke 21:5-19

## November 23rd – Christ the King Sunday

Jeremiah 23:1-6; Luke 1:68-79;  
Colossians 1:11-20; Luke 23:33-43

## November 30th – First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122:1-9;  
Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44

## FOOD BANK

November Food Bank – Mayonnaise, applesauce (jars), pineapple (can), peanut butter, tomato soup (10 oz size), chicken noodle soup (10 oz size), seafood chowder/soup (can), microwave popcorn, fruit cups, Triscuits/Wheat Thins

~Thanksgiving Meal 2025 ~

(non-perishable donations should be brought to Union by Sunday, November 9th or any food to the food bank by Monday, Nov. 10th)

Turkey or gift card to Giant, Stuffing Mix, Cranberry Sauce (can), Yellow Cake Mix (box), pumpkin puree (30 oz. can), evaporated milk (16 oz can), Canned Yams, Packets or a jar of Turkey Gravy, Green beans (can), Cream of mushroom soup

## SEPTEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

Giving for Sept.: \$9,822      Sept. Expenses: \$15,258

Year-To-Date: Giving - \$117,794    Expenses - \$128,613

Sept. Avg. Attendance: 55

Sunday School collection for the Glovers: \$80

## Happy Birthday!



- 1 Charlotte Stoner
- 2 Richard Stoner
- 3 Casey McCardell Cotton
- 4 Ray Wallace
- 5 Michael Whiteside  
Bill Bard (Jr.)  
Gregory Nixon  
James Nixon
- 6 Lois Rineer  
Evan Hastings
- 8 Judy Beiler
- 9 Andrea Nixon  
Richard Hastings  
Tom Chase  
Mick Chase
- 10 Sharon Noonan  
Joyce Gunzenhauser  
Mary Denise Slodki
- 16 William Jackson, Jr.
- 19 James Martin
- 22 Brian Wade
- 23 Matthew Sheaffer
- 28 Thomas McCardell
- 30 Laura Greenleaf

## GREETERS

- 2 (Open)
- 9 Bill & Trudy Bard
- 16 (Open)
- 23 (Open)
- 30 (Open)

Union Presbyterian Church  
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Kirkwood, PA 17536

VISIT US ONLINE AT [WWW.UNIONPRES.COM](http://WWW.UNIONPRES.COM)



## Union Post Office

The post office at Union Church will operate for the Christmas Holiday Season. Christmas

Cards will be delivered to anyone who attends church in person. Please place the cards in the box in the lobby. Please have first and last name on the envelope.

**December 7th will be the last day to bring cards.** The sooner cards are deposited the better! If you have any questions, please ask Arlene or Donald Hastings 529-2495.



## Christmas Organ Concert

**Come celebrate the birth  
of our Lord! Join us for  
our annual organ concert  
by Bob Trimble on  
Sunday, December 21st  
at 6:30pm in the Union  
sanctuary.**



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