

THE UNION PRESS

“To know Him and make Him known”

PASTOR’S MESSAGE

CAN I BE SURE I’M GOING TO HEAVEN?

The short answer is: yes.

And yet, many people wrestle with this question. They worry that if they don’t make it to heaven, it will ultimately be because of something they did—or failed to do. This concern often comes from a misunderstanding of the gospel.

Some believe that while Jesus makes salvation possible, our final destination depends on whether we are “good enough.” But that is not the gospel.

The Bible is clear: none of us are good enough.

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” — Romans 3:23

“The wages of sin is death.” — Romans 6:23

Every one of us stands guilty before a holy God. In Adam, all humanity has fallen under the curse of sin—a curse that leads to death and judgment. God would be perfectly just if He left us in that condition.

But He did not.

Instead, in His mercy, God promised a Savior—one who would defeat sin and redeem

His people. Throughout the Old Testament, we see this promise unfolding in shadows and signs: in sacrifices, in prophecies, and in the covenant signs of circumcision and Passover. All of it points forward to the One who was to come.

Then, at just the right time, God sent His Son.

Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, was born of a woman, born under the law, to be our Savior. The gospel—literally “good news”—is the message of who He is and what He has done.

To understand this good news, we must understand two essential truths about Jesus.

First, **He is truly human.**

He lived a real human life—born to earthly parents, raised in a home, growing, learning, working, and experiencing the brokenness of our world. He was tempted in every way, just as we are, yet without sin.

Second, **He is truly God.**

He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He is the image of the invisible God, and in Him the fullness of deity dwells bodily.

Our Savior had to be both God and man. As man, He could represent us and bear our sin. As God, He could overcome death and accomplish our salvation.

As the true and better Adam, Jesus lived the life the Adam failed to live—perfectly obedient to the will of His Father. He willingly went to the cross in our place, to suffer the penalty for our sins. And in His resurrection, He conquered sin and death once and for all.

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**Newsletter
Submissions for
the May issue are
due April 26th**

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So, what does this mean for us?

It means that salvation is not something we achieve nor is Heaven something we earn.

When we trust in Christ, we are united to Him by the Holy Spirit. And in Him, we receive every spiritual blessing:

We are justified—no longer condemned before God

We are sanctified—being made holy

We are adopted—brought into God's family

We are reconciled—restored to relationship with Him

We are redeemed—freed from slavery to sin

We are forgiven—our sins washed away

We are born again—given new life by the Holy Spirit

We are made heirs—with an eternal inheritance

Apart from Christ, we have none of this. In Christ, we have all of it.

The apostle Peter writes:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.” — 1 Peter 1:3–4

Heaven is not earned by our works—it is secured by Christ, and freely given by His grace.

A powerful picture of this truth comes from the account of the thief on the cross (Luke 23:39–43). Here was a man who had no religious résumé to present, no time to “clean up” his life. And yet, in his final moments, he turned to Jesus in faith. And Jesus said to him, “Today you will be with me in paradise.”

Why? Because Jesus had done for this man what he could not do for himself.

As pastor Alistair Begg famously illustrated, in a sermon “The Power and Message of the Cross”

“Think about the thief on the cross . . . I can't wait to find that fellow one day to ask him, “How did that shake out for you? Because you were cussing the guy out with your friend. You've never been in a Bible study. You never got baptized . . . You didn't know a thing about church membership, and yet . . . you made it. How did you make it?” That's what the angel must have said, you know:

“What are you doing here?”

“I don't know.”

“What do you mean you don't know?”

“I don't know.”

“Excuse me, let me get my supervisor.” They go get their supervisor angel. “So, just a few questions for you. First of all, are you clear on the doctrine of justification by faith?”

The guy said, “I've never heard of it in my life.”

“And what about the doctrine of Scripture?”

This guy's just staring — and eventually, in frustration, the supervisor says, “On what basis are you here?”

*And he said, “**The Man on the middle cross said I can come.**”*

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Take a minute and apply this to your own thinking. On that day when you are asked why you should gain access to heaven, your answer cannot begin with "Because I..." It must begin with "Because He..."

Because He lived.

Because He died.

Because He rose again.

Because He said I could come.

That is the only answer.

If we take our eyes off Christ and begin to trust in ourselves—even subtly—we will either fall into despair ("I'm not good enough") or pride ("I'm doing pretty well"). The gospel leaves no room for either.

Our hope rests entirely in Jesus.

There are more questions we could ask. "What role do good works play in all this?" "What about those who turn to Christ at the very end of life, after doing terrible things?" "Do I want to be in Heaven with "those people"?"

Those are important questions, and we will tackle them in the coming months—but they all rest on this foundation:

Can we be sure we are going to heaven? Yes.

Not because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done for us.

QUILTING



A very special thank you to everyone who helped make the quilts and get them knotted. We were able to complete thirty-two quilts and three lap robes this year.





2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 10:00 Prayer Mtg 6:30 Union Growth Group	2 5:30 Quarryville Growth Group Maundy Thursday	3 1:30 Kirkwood Growth Groups 7:00 Good Friday Service @ Little Britain Good Friday	4
5 8:30 Prayer Meeting 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship Easter Sunday	6 6:30 Octorara Pines Growth Group	7	8 10:00 Prayer Mtg 6:30 Union Growth Group	9	10 1:30 Kirkwood Growth Groups	11
12 8:30 Prayer Meeting 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	13 1:00 Bible Study 6:30 Octorara Pines Growth Group	14 7:00 Safety Mtg	15 10:00 Prayer Mtg 6:30 Union Growth Group 7:00 Session Mtg	16 5:30 Quarryville Growth Group	17 1:30 Kirkwood Growth Groups 6:00-8:00 pm Family Night	18
19 8:30 Prayer Meeting 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	20 6:30 Octorara Pines Growth Group	21	22 10:00 Prayer Mtg 6:30 Union Growth Group	23	24 1:30 Kirkwood Growth Groups	25
26 8:30 Prayer Meeting 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Worship	27 6:30 Octorara Pines Growth Group	28	29 10:00 Prayer Mtg 6:30 Union Growth Group	30		

FOOD BANK

Cheerios (regular, yellow box), canned pears (no sugar or in fruit juice; 14.5 oz can), canned fruit cocktail (no sugar or in fruit juice; 14.5 oz can), Hanover chili beans (15 oz can), refried beans (16 oz can), seafood soup/chowder (cans), chicken noodle soup (10.5 oz can), mayonnaise, snack crackers (individually wrapped packs), microwave popcorn, fruit cups, granola bars

LECTIONARY PASSAGES

April 5th

The Resurrection of the Lord

Acts 10:34-43;
Psalm 118:1-2,14-24;
Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-18

April 12th

2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a,22-32; Psalm 16:1-11;
1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

April 19th

3rd Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a,36-41;
Psalm 116:1-4,12-19;
1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35

April 26th

4th Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23:1-6;
1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10

APRIL GREETERS

5 – (Still Available)
12 – Larry & Colleen Sheaffer
19 – (Still Available)
26 – (Still Available)

APRIL



3 Kent Wade
5 Reenie Chase
6 Stanley Vasco
8 David Kelley
11 Brooke McCardell Daly
Angela Slodki
12 Gregory Trimble
14 Carla Peterson
17 Keith Hastings
18 Bailey McCardell Hoefling
23 Colleen Shoemaker
25 Arlene Hastings
26 Alexandria Wallace Frackman
29 William Noonan
30 Larry Sheaffer

Did You Know Union Has a Safety Team?

In 2024, the Session appointed a Safety Team to develop recommendations and plans for situations that may arise within our church. Since then, the team has been meeting regularly and has created a booklet outlining best practices for responding to events such as medical emergencies, fires, severe weather, disruptive individuals, and active shooter situations.

We understand that it can be difficult—and even unsettling—to think about these possibilities. However, our goal is to care for and protect everyone in our congregation and all who enter our church by being prepared, even for unlikely scenarios.

You may have already noticed some safety measures in place, such as doors being locked during services. The doors are secured around 10:05 a.m. If you arrive after that time, please ring the doorbell at the entrance to the new wing.

We are also preparing brochures that will include important information such as emergency exit routes, AED locations, first aid supplies, and fire extinguishers. These will be available soon.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please feel free to speak with any member of the Safety Team: Marty Greenleaf (Chairman), Darlene Gray, Carla Peterson, Josh Gregor, or Jesse Holmes.

Union Presbyterian Church
5637 Street Road,
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The Union Press

April 2026

CHILDREN'S OUTREACH

Happy Easter from your friends at Union Presbyterian Church

We hope you enjoy and celebrate Easter this year as we remember that Jesus not only died for our sins but conquered death forever when he rose on Easter day! Hallelujah, we can now live again with closeness to God.

This water bottle is hopefully not just practical but also a helpful (and fun) tool for you when you would like to share your faith with friends. The color stickers are adapted from "The Wordless Book," a Christian tool created by Charles Spurgeon that uses colored pages without text to explain God's plan of salvation. You can see shorthand what each color stands for on your bookmark. A 6-minute YouTube example of using the colors can be viewed by scanning the QR Code.

