



# The Union News

Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ

401 Lake Avenue East, PO Box 10, Hackensack, MN 56452-0010

*"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey—you are welcome here"*

*An "Open and Affirming" Congregation*



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## OCTOBER 2021

### Notes from Rev. Torri Vande Zande

#### *My Prayer Journey...*

I was with a group of friends a few weeks ago, and we were talking about prayer. Each of them had their own ideas, definition, and experiences with prayer. Some spoke of learning from a young age how they were supposed to pray, but now they view prayer very differently.

As I listened, my mind and heart became in sync with what they were saying. I could almost hear my Sunday School teacher say, *"Now Torri, bow your head, fold your hands, and close your eyes."* This is my first memory of learning how to pray. I needed to perform a checklist before I began talking to God. Head bowed... check! Hands folded... check! Eyes closed... check! Now I am ready to pray.

As I grew older, prayer became more of an essay paper. There was an introduction (Dear God) or some type of address to who God is, followed by some adjectives that described God. Then I would confess my sin and ask for-giveness, then say a few sentences about what I was thank-ful for, and after that I began my list of people I needed to pray for. Lastly, I would say a grand ending making sure I used Jesus' name and wrap it all up with an "Amen."

I have to admit, I still pray the essay paper prayer some-times. You will notice that I say this type of prayer during Sunday services. It isn't bad, just more formal. And I think that is okay.

When I started working in full-time ministry, my boss called

*(Continued on page 3)*

Sunday Worship at 9:30 AM

Communion: First Sunday each Month

**CHURCH COUNCIL**

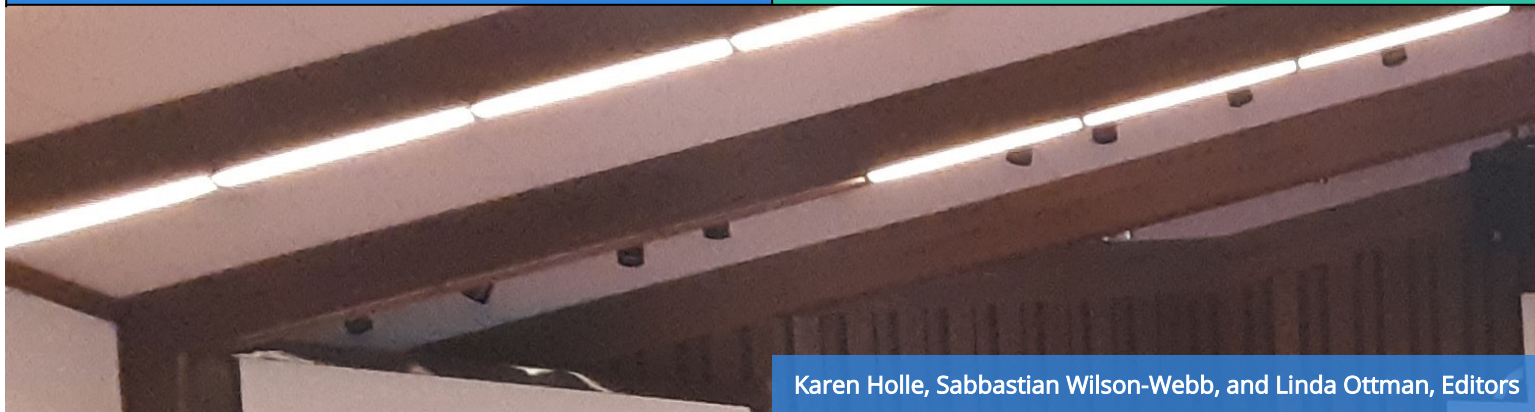
Moderator.....Mike Bohanon  
Vice-Moderators.....Marilyn & Steve Erickson  
Clerk.....Karen Holle  
Board of Financial Stewardship.....Don Hoppe

Ministry Teams:	
Christian Learning.....	Jo Horak
Congregational Life.....	Joni Kumpula
Facilities.....	Mike Bohanon and Ron Merritt
Personnel.....	Church Council
Worship.....	Heidi Hoppe
Men's Fellowship.....	Stan Kumpula
Women's Fellowship.....	Joni Kumpula
Outreach.....	Karen Holle
Treasure Sale.....	Cindy Gulbrandson

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

October 1	Carole Griggs
October 4	Mary Curo
	Lynn Smith
October 5	Karen Wiersma
October 6	Jean Carlson
October 9	Jo Horak
October 11	Bob Horak
October 18	Rodney Damm
October 22	Wesley Cline
October 23	Don Smith
October 25	Mary Lou Nissly
October 31	Miho Adkins
	Paul Courneya

Happy Birthday



(Continued from page 1)

me in his office one day and asked how my relationship with God was going. He caught me off guard, so I stumbled through some type of explanation that sounded pathetic. I mean... seriously, what boss asks that?

He then began to lecture me about how important it is to get up early in the morning to read the bible and pray. *"You need to get up early to pray. Giving God the first fruit of your day will help you focus."* He challenged me to get up early in the mornings and to read the bible and pray before I do anything else. I reluctantly accepted the challenge knowing it was going to be a miserable experience.

Why? Here are a few things you need to know about me:

1. I am NOT a morning person. I do not function well in the morning. Giving God my BEST, will never happen before 8:00 a.m.
2. I do NOT like being told what to do, especially when it comes to personal choice. I believe this comes from me being the youngest in my family.

So, the next morning my alarm goes off at 6:00 a.m. I hit the snooze 4 times but eventually rolled out of bed (I literally rolled out of bed). I crawled over to my bible which I left on the floor the night before, and then propped myself up in the corner of the room so I didn't lay back down. I opened my bible, but nothing that I read made sense. I tried to pray but all that came out was, "Hi God." I did this for three days before I realized this was NOT going well.

Over the last 25 years I have learned to pray in many different ways. Ways where I can really feel like I can connect with God. Some ways I like better than others, but all have been of value to me in one way or another.

Here are a few of my favorite ways to pray:

1. Driving – I love to drive and talk with God. Sometimes I do "drive-by" prayers as I pass the homes of those I know.
2. Walking – I pray while I walk Koda a lot. I take in the beauty of creation and spend most of my time telling God how amazing I think everything is.
3. Drawing – When I was younger, I used to draw people that I was praying for. Now, I do more doodling. I know this sounds kind of silly, but I love to let my mind wander in prayer as I doodle.
4. Breathing – There have been times in my life when I have no words. There is nothing I can say that will express what I feel. So, I breathe. My breaths become my prayers.

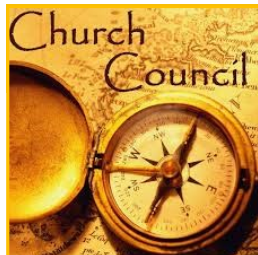
We all have different ways of praying. All of us connect to God in different ways, and that is okay. It is more than okay... it is beautiful!

So, my friends, find a way... find YOUR way of praying and connecting with God. Feel free to try one of my favorite ways if you would like, or you can make up your own.

May God speak TO you and WITH you as you find your way of prayer.

Blessings,

Pastor Torri



# COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## September 16th, 2021

**Present:** Mike Bohanon, Joni Kumpula, Stan Kumpula, Tom Cox, Mary Parrish, Don Hoppe, Heidi Hoppe, Cindy Gulbrandson, Pastor Torri, and Jo Horak. Via Zoom, Steve and Marilyn Erickson (briefly – the audio was bad, so they dropped off. Pastor Torri will bring them up to date.)

**Absent:** Karen Holle

1:05 Call to Order and Welcome by Mike, and Convening Prayer by Pastor Torri.

Approval of Agenda - Tom/Mary, passed.

Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting - Add Steve & Marilyn to attendees. Tom/Heidi

**Pastor's Monthly Report to Council** – Pastor Torri indicated that additions/corrections to children/vulnerable adults policy have been made and sent to Executive Committee for approval.

### Executive Council Report

- Policy and Procedure for children and vulnerable adults – see Pastor's Report.
- Youth programs - Are we ready to have unprotected children attend programming at this time? Because of the explosion of COVID cases in Cass County, we recommend canceling programs for children. This would reverse Council's decision to allow Morning Out to begin September 8th. Tom/Stan to approve Exec proposal to cancel programming which includes children.
- Facilities Board – Members include Ron, Mike, Kerry Swenson, Stan Kumpula, and Men's Fellowship.
- Board of Christian Learning - Discussed splitting the job description into two parts; one for children/family and one for adults. Mary/Tom, passed

**Community Meal** – This program will become a part of Outreach Ministry Team. Joni/Mary, passed

**Financial Stewardship Board Report** - Don reported that August income is lower than last year, but expenses were also lower. Overall, income is substantially lower than fiscal year 2020. The church's donation/giving for the rest of 2021 may be low for meeting the budget. Less than projected non-pledge giving and incompleteness of pledges are a concern. At this time, we have received 27 pledges for a total of \$57,535. We are hoping to receive another 18 – 22 pledges for approximately \$39,000 to \$43,000 additional income. The Board will contact households who have not yet pledged.

**Facilities Board Report** (Ron and Mike) - No report

**Personnel Board** - Union may want to offer Mike Schmitt a stipend for working on Sunday mornings. We discussed purchasing a \$150 gift certificate to Boulders Restaurant for Mike and Connie. Tom/Joni, passed

### Ministry Team Reports -

- Congregational Life (Joni) Team is keeping in contact with those who are isolated. Discussion of Coffee Hour, vaccinations, masking. Joni/Heidi - Effective immediately to recommend vaccinations and social distancing, and masks will be required for indoor activities.
- Worship (Heidi) Discussion of the old Bible - Heidi will provide a ballpark figure for repairing the bible for future discussion.
- Women's Fellowship (Joni) - Done with blanket making. Looking for little service projects. Will continue with prayer bears.
- Men's Fellowship (Stan) Mike Schmitt gave the program earlier this month, explaining the equipment he has donated. Projected programming for October: Gary Dietrich will talk about solar project at St. Paul's, and Norm Moody

(Continued on page 5)



(Continued from page 4)

will talk about the advantages of the solar energy program.

- Christian Learning (Jo) - Report attached. Team will be reorganizing due to Council vote.
- Justice Ministry Team (Tom) - Sept 12th forum was cancelled because group couldn't provide speaker. Outdoor potluck on Sept 21 at Onigum (Covid and weather permitting). (Masks are required in the Onigum Community Center.)
- Outreach (Karen) - No report
- Treasure Sale (Cindy) - No report.

**Moderator's Moment** - Mike has received calls from people who wish to leave the church. Congregational Life will talk to those people and report to Council.

**Newsletter Deadline** - Wed, September 22

### Old Business

Update on streaming for worship - New video equipment has been installed. Still working to improve sound.

Give Travis LaMar permission to hunt on the Woock-Ness property. Joni/Stam (one negative vote at Moderator's request).

### New Business

Men's Fellowship would like to offer a forum next summer regarding TRIAD, with Woman's Fellowship providing the treats.

2:19 Adjournment and Benediction

## MISSION OF THE MONTH—NEIGHBORS IN NEED

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive throughout the month of October, supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

Through [ucc.org/justice](http://ucc.org/justice), our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice.

Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hocak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the U.S.

If you would like to support the Neighbors in Need program of the United Church of Christ, please send a check to the church with NIN in the memo line. Thank you!

## THROUGH KODA'S EYES



Hi, my name is Koda, and I am the Church Dog in Training. I want to tell you about my new foster-sister. My human decided to add her to our family. Her name is Lassie. Lassie is friendly, playful, and sweet. Lassie is also big, strong, and stubborn.

She came to live with us about 4 weeks ago. She is from a home where she was tied up on a chain outside all the time. She was not used to being in the house or having manners, but I have been a good foster-brother. So far, I have taught her how to sit, stay, and jump in and out of the car. I have also taught her how to jump on people. My human said that I should not teach her that anymore, but I think it is too late.

Being a foster-brother is exhausting! Lassie is only 1 year old, but she outweighs me by 15 pounds! I had to learn some evasive maneuvers in order to wrestle her. She is like a sumo wrestler, and I am like a ninja! My human tells me that we are quite entertaining to watch.

Life has been a bit harder since Lassie came to live with us. I do not get as much attention as I used to, I have to share the bed, and worst of all I have to share my toys! I love my toys and take very good care of them. Granted, sometimes I lose them or leave them somewhere (like the Friendship Hall or Sanctuary)... but for the most part I treat my toys nicely. Lassie however is on a mission to destroy all toys, including mine. I have had to say good-bye to 4 of my plushies so far, but my human has introduced some more durable chew toys that seem to satisfy her need to rip things apart. I know the more durable toys will go with Lassie when she finds her forever home, she will need them, but I miss my toys. I also miss the attention my human gave me, and I even miss Bandit (the cat). He had to move out to the shed because Lassie mistook him for a squirrel and Bandit (the cat) almost lost his life!



Life is so different now. I miss how things used to be. I want to chew on my toys, lay in my window, not worry about where Lassie is or if she is going to pounce on me. I just want things to be normal again. But I also know I cannot just think about me. I have to think about Lassie and how she must feel coming all the way up here on a bus, meeting so many different people, getting taken in to a home that she has never been in before. She must have been so scared, so confused, and maybe even felt like she was not safe. I have to remember her perspective too. Maybe I need to be more understanding when she acts out, gets naughty, or tries to destroy things.

I have to admit, Lassie is learning and growing. She is not perfect, but she is going to make a great dog for some family out there. I just need to walk (and play) alongside of her through this really hard time. It is a hard time for both of us, but I think we can do this together.

Barks and Wiggles,

Koda (The Church Dog in Training)

# IN MEMORIUM—NATALIE W. HOLLE

June 22, 1924—September 9, 2021

I am writing this about two weeks after Natalie's death in St. Paul at a great care facility called Renewed Spirit. Michael Small was kind enough to come to the Twin Cities to conduct the service. This was fun for the family as Michael knew Natalie and Earl Holle very well. Natalie was very involved in Union Church for many years and was instrumental in getting me involved in the church. I didn't come from a family where church was important to daily life. It has been a pleasure to add the dimension of church to my life, and I thank Natalie for inspiring me to do so.

Natalie lived her long, full life embracing the better side of human nature. She was brilliant, had a great strength of moral character, and was deeply spiritual and intuitive. She sincerely embraced "love never fails" and taught by example. Ahead of her time, she was passionate about social issues and, after her children were raised, was a GED instructor for the Des Moines Area Community College. There is no question that Natalie made the world a better place through the values she embraced and the lives that she touched. She will be greatly missed! Those that knew her and loved her will always carry her in their hearts.

- Karen Holle

## CELEBRATING THE PAST

*Myra Damm, Historian*

### Time of Growth

#### The Library—New Addition Building

The library is one of my favorite places in the church. It was used for small meetings, was warm, cozy and intimate. There were soft couches and cozy chairs, and lots of books lined the walls on two sides. There was a "family sized" table to gather around for meeting with lots of decisions being made around this table. There was a small sink, and plugins for coffee making. This was a place to go to for those smaller gatherings.

The library was taken care of by volunteers, and the books were available to check out for a "good length of time." Because this is "cabin" country, people would bring books to the cabin, then donate to the church library. The selections were varied and cataloged so it was easy to find a favorite read to take home for those rainy days at the cabin or to drop off at the end of the season so one didn't have to take the books back home. One can find such a variety from biographies to religion and philosophy, and of course some just fun mysteries and easy reading. There really is no time limit on the length of time to keep a book. It is usually replaced along the way with another book just as good.

If you haven't visited the library room, poke your head in the door and check out this space.





## A GREAT POTLUCK DINNER

On Tuesday night, September 21, about 130 people, including Native Americans and the rest of us, gathered for a great potluck second annual Unity Day dinner. (The first Unity Day Dinner was held outside the Court-house in Walker in the fall before the virus struck.) Tables for six, covered with colorful tablecloths, were set up on the edge of the Powwow field (sacred ground) outside the Onigum Community Center. Other tables were laden with a vast amount of food, some provided by the Casino, but mostly from all the attendees. Our own Pastor Torri was the Master of Ceremonies.

Torri explained to the group that she was a member of the Leech Lake Culture Alliance, a nonprofit organization striving to bring different cultures together through local events like this dinner. Then she introduced Far-ron Jackson, Chairman of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, and Annie McMurrin, Mayor of Walker, who both welcomed the crowd and praised the effort by the Alliance to bring people together.

Gary Charwood, of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, addressed the group in both English and Anishinaabe, and explained the Spirit Plate, in which a plate is filled with a tiny bit of each kind of food on the table and set aside for the Great Spirit. As he spoke, Priscilla Smith, a member of the Alliance, walked the full length of the food tables putting a very small bit of each offering on the Spirit Plate. Pastor Matt Cobb, of St. John's Episcopal Church in Onigum, pronounced a prayer of blessing on the food and the occasion. Then the Elders of the community were invited to go first to fill their plates at the food tables. Although they were supposed to be called up by tables, pretty much everyone got in line after the Elders and discovered there was so much food that no one could possibly sample every dish. Eventually Torri announced that there were to-go boxes and people were welcome to fill them up with whatever leftover food they desired.

Some of the people left soon after they had finished eating. While a drummer had been expected, he had been called away to a family emergency, so Charwood set up a round dance to recorded music, and the remaining group danced in a circle around a group of the tables.

Despite the cool weather, there was great warmth in the people gathered round on this special occasion, and we all look forward to future events planned by the Alliance.

Sarah Cox

## NOTES FROM THE BOARD OF FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

The Harvest Moon was last night, and the nights and days are cooler. Many of our friends have gone or are planning to leave for their winter homes. We had about an inch of rain last night, for which we are happy.

In August, we began our Stewardship Campaign for 2022 with the theme **"The Journey from Gratitude to Generosity,"** which we continued into September. As I write this note, we have received 31 pledges for a total of \$71,935. We are hoping for another 16-20 pledges. If you have not yet pledged, we hope that you will prayerfully consider what Union Church means to you and this community, and generously pledge. If you have misplaced your pledge card, please contact the church or Don Hoppe at 675-6265 or 218-839-4341 for another one.

The Board of Financial Stewardship in its report to the Church Council at their September meeting noted that August income was significantly less than last year, and income continues to be behind the 2020 level. The positive side is that expenses were less than income in August.

Donation/giving for the rest of 2021 may be low for meeting the budget, and less than projected non-pledge giving and the incompleteness of current pledges continue to be a concern.

We hope you have a great October and stay healthy and safe.

Christ's Love and Peace to You,

Don Hoppe, Sheryl Kaubisch, and Caryl Allan - Board of Financial Stewardship



## NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Fall is fast approaching - leaves are beginning to turn, and the mornings are a bit “nippy” in Hackensack. However, we’re hoping to still have a few warm days!

Improvements to the video and audio equipment for streaming our services are the important topics of conversation for me. The new equipment is installed, and now the team is working to coordinate everything. It's an ongoing process, and many thanks to the team who have been working tirelessly to put it together - Mike Schmitt, Stan Kumpula, and Don Hoppe. They have spent hours wiring in the new cameras and integrating everything on the sound board. There are still glitches, but every week gets better! The best worship experience is still felt in the sanctuary, and I encourage everyone who can to attend in person. However, if you are away or are not comfortable being in the Sanctuary with 25 to 30 other people, streaming is the next best thing.

The recent decision by the Council to require masks for any indoor activity deserves to be recognized as our attempt to keep everyone safe. With several cases of COVID-19 in Walker, I feel that it is important to realize that wearing masks is an act of love. In this way we can do our best to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Best wishes to our friends who are leaving for the winter. We already miss you and look forward to your return next spring.

Heidi Hoppe, Chair; Caryl Allan, Sheryl Kaubisch, Mary Parrish, Gracee Rudkin

## CHRISTIAN LEARNING REPORT

**The Christian Learning Report**—October's cooler weather and bright skies demonstrate that Fall has arrived. Actually, the official date was Wednesday, September 22, when we celebrated the Fall Equinox. Our program has lots of other things to celebrate as well. A summary of items are listed below.

**The Community Meal Program Is Up And Running**—We have adjusted to the need to offer our hot, healthy meals on a drive-up basis instead of inside. Meals are available for pick up at the Upper Level West Entrance between the hours of 4:00 - 5:30 PM every Wednesday. If you have special dietary needs, please call Sue at (218) 820-3870. Each meal includes an entree, side, and dessert. Menu items will be posted for October very soon. Meals are open to all in the community area and are free. Donations are gratefully accepted. Your support of this mission work is greatly appreciated.

**Monday Morning Bible Study Revises Schedule**—As cooler weather arrives and schedules change this dedicated group has been considering a change of location from our outdoor venue. We have enjoyed sharing the beauty of God's creation during the summer months with our studies and prayers. Suggestions for alternate locations and times are in discussion and will be revealed soon. Right now we meet at Ellie's or Bonnie's and use “Upper Room” materials as well as other resources. This group is open to all interested parties. It is not necessary to be a member of Union Church to attend. Materials are available as well as refreshments, prayers, and support. Please join us at 10:00-11:30 AM for an uplifting morning. Contact Bonnie at (218) 675-5999 to confirm, as locations may vary.

**Morning Out Program Put On Hold**—Due to concern around Delta-Covid concerns, the Council has decided that this program will not be offered at this time. It may be evaluated at another time. It offers support to families with preschoolers so parents and other guardians can attend necessary appointments without bringing youngsters with them. Children are supervised by two caring, experienced adults who have completed Child/Adult Safety Training. Future updates are planned.

**Future Forums Uncertain At This Time**—We have had some wonderful Forums this summer but late fall saw at least one cancelled. We welcome suggestions for items of interest to be shared at Union Church and the larger community.

**Memorial Scholarship Team Meeting**—Once again, Covid concerns have affected programming for this project. We were not able to recognize last year's awardees in person. However, checks were sent to Gabe Lohr and Rachel Pitt with congratulations. A meeting is planned to consider how scholarships for 2022 will be awarded. Again, support for this Union Church mission is greatly appreciated.

Revisions to the Christian Learning Program are in the works. More information will be forthcoming soon. Meanwhile, prayers and blessings are being sent to you and yours during this challenging time in our world.

Peace.

# ONGOING EVENTS



## Women's Fellowship

Thursday, October 14th at 1:00 pm in the Friendship Hall.

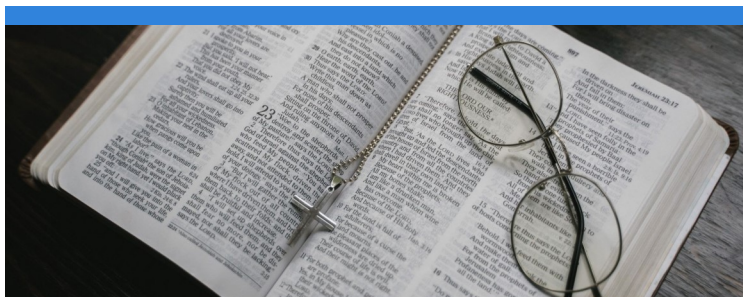
If you have any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at [unionucc401@gmail.com](mailto:unionucc401@gmail.com).



## Men's Fellowship

Tuesday, October 5th at 9:00 am in the Friendship Hall.

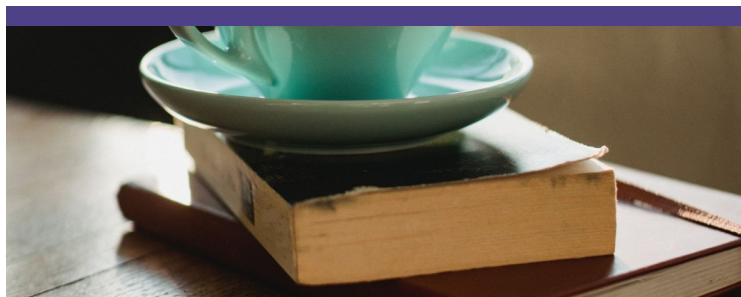
If you have any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at [unionucc401@gmail.com](mailto:unionucc401@gmail.com).



## Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesdays at noon, in the library, or on Zoom.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at [unionucc401@gmail.com](mailto:unionucc401@gmail.com).



## Book Study

*Neither Wolf Nor Dog*

Every other Wednesday at 7:00pm, in the library or on Zoom.



## Coffee Hour on Sunday Mornings

Did you know we have coffee hour after each and every service? Come and meet some new and old friends on Sunday mornings. Our treat.



## Community Table

Every Wednesday at 4:00pm, drive-through only.  
Call Sue at (218) 820-3870 to reserve your meal.

Bone Builders\* 1:30 pm -2:30 pm  
Every Monday and Friday

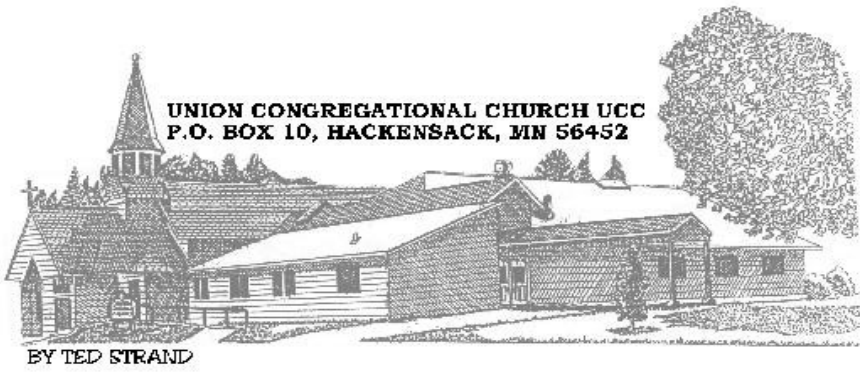
# Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

## OCTOBER 2021

\* = Community Event held at the church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 1:30– Bone Builders *	2
3 9:30am Worship & Communion 10:30am Coffee Hour	4 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	5 9:00am Men's Group	6 12:00pm Bible Study 4:00pm Community Table	7	8 1:30– Bone Builders *	9
10 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	11 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	12 5:30pm Financial Board Meeting	13 12:00pm Bible Study 4:00pm Community Table 7:00pm Book Study—Neither Wolf Nor Dog	14 1:00pm Women's Fellowship	15 1:30 Bone Builders *	16
17 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	18 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	19	20 12:00pm Bible Study 1:00pm Book and Thimble* 4:00pm Community Table	21 1:00pm Church Council	22 1:30 Bone Builders *	23
24 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	25 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	26	27 12:00pm Bible Study 4:00pm Community Table 7:00pm Book Study—Neither Wolf Nor Dog	28 1:00pm Fiber Arts*	29 1:30 Bone Builders *	30
31 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour						





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FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED



2021

We have new audio/visual equipment  
for Sunday Service streaming!  
Info about Monthly Mission  
“Neighbors in Need” inside!

THE UNION NEWS