

Notes from

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

Church Office: (218) 675-6300 Pastor: Rev. Torri Vande Zande

Rev. Torri Vande Zande

http://www.unioncchackensack.com Email: unionucc401@gmail.com Toll Free: (888) 887-4820 Emergency Phone: (218) 507-1905



Seminary Did Not Prepare Me for This!

JUNE 2020

This has been a phrase I have said several times in the past few months. Seminary did not prepare me for a pandemic. Who knew that the spring and probably most of the summer of 2020 would be filled with wearing masks, cancelled events, virtual worship services and social distancing. It is not the way I prefer to do ministry, but here we are... doing our best to be the Church in the middle of a pandemic.

One of the biggest struggles I have dealt with is the Sunday morning worship services. I miss the interaction with friends and preaching to a group of people who laugh and respond to what I say. I miss the coffee time after the service to sit down and just simply visit with people to see how they are doing. I miss people telling me my stole is crooked or my collar is folded under. I miss people... and I'm pretty sure anyone who is reading this does too.



Seminary did not prepare me to lead a Sunday morning worship service during a pan-

demic. My focus use to be on people, but now my focus is on technology. Is the video feed "glitchy"? Is the sound okay? Does the image freeze? Do the words match my lips? Is the Wi-Fi strong enough to carry the signal? All of these questions sound so... not pastoral!

But I know that Sunday morning worship is important and the only way we can do a worship service right now is virtually. So, I (and the Worship Team) are determined to create a virtual worship service that communicates clearly the love and encouragement of God. We have come to understand that we need to be more informed about technology because that is how we are communicating with most of you right now.



What we have done so far:

• We purchased a streaming service called "Streamyard". This is a company that can stream our service to multiple locations. So now people can see our worship service live on Facebook, YouTube and our website.

• We invested in a few items that help you experience the worship service more clearly. For example, we bought a new streaming microphone that helps pick up the piano much more clearly and it also picks up voices all over the room. We are standing 6-8 feet apart from one another and from the microphone, but it sounds good (I think)... at lease much better than a few weeks ago.

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Sunday Worship at 9:30 A.M. Communion: First Sunday each Month Coffee and Fellowship Following Service at 10:30 A.M.

| Pastor | Rev. Torri Vande Zande |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Church Secretary | Sabbastian Wilson-Webb |
| Financial Secretary | Don Hoppe |
| Treasurer | Sheryl Kaubisch |
| Choir Director | Sheryl Kaubisch |
| Bell Choir Director | Heidi Hoppe |
| Organists | Sheryl Kaubisch |
| Pianist | Kathleen Millberg, Barb Nish |
| Custodian | Sue Johnson |
| "Morning Out" | Sue Johnson |
| - | |

Church Council

| Moderator | Joni Kumpula |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Vice-Moderator | |
| Clerk | Karen Holle |
| Board of Financial Stewardship | Don Hoppe |
| Ministry Teams: | |
| Christian Learning | Jo Horak |
| Congregational Life | Margaret Zieffler |
| Facilities | Mike Bohanon and Ron Merritt |
| Personnel | Church Council |
| 147 1 | 11.2.2.1 |

| Personnei | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Worship | Heidi Hoppe |
| Men's Fellowship | |
| Women's Fellowship | |
| • | |

MODERATOR'S NOTES

Summer time greetings! Hope this finds everyone healthy, masked and social distancing. This is going to be a long haul but together we will make it. It will take kindness, patience and acceptance. The good news is that is what Union is all about! Let's take this time to shine... Have you taken time to call your Union buddies? Those calls do bring joy. Have you watched the Sunday worship services on line? Believe me they are greatly improving in video quality each week, do watch and be uplifted.

Activities are still going. Church is not a building, it's the people. Boards and ministry teams are all meeting. Wednesday meals are still being served. Council met in the Friendship Hall both in person masked and social distancing and on Zoom. It worked quite well.

Stan and I are feeling very blessed to be living up here, there is so much to enjoy taking all health precautions. Besides, there is enough outside work to last forever! Our daughter Lynn and family came up for the weekend. They stayed in the cabin and used the cabin facilities. We ate at both ends of a very long table, like a TV comedy and social distanced. It worked well and was so nice to see them. We can do this!

Hope to see or hear you soon. Must run along the weeds are growing,

Joni

Love you all!!!

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

| June 1 | Bert Wiersma |
|---------|-------------------|
| June 3 | Vernon Peterson |
| June 10 | Sheila Hunter |
| | Candace Strawn |
| June 16 | Luise Forseth |
| | Joni Kumpula |
| June 17 | Del Towne |
| June 19 | Dick Olsen |
| | Pat Pomeroy |
| June 20 | Sue Johnson |
| June 22 | Natalie Holle |
| June 25 | Stan Johnson |
| June 27 | Cindy Gulbrandson |
| June 28 | Don Olsen |



Karen Holle and Sabbastian Wilson-Webb, Editors

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FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

On June 1, Minnesota moves into a new phase of guidelines for response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Union Church's response and guidelines have also changed. You will see more about that in the newsletter.

Financially, Union Church is weathering the pandemic fairly well up until this point. Pledges and donations are coming in through mail and electronic funds transfers. Funds coming last month was a little less than last year, but expenses were down by about the same amount.

The church requested a Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan and it was approved. Some or all of payroll expense and some of the utilities expenses may be forgiven for an 8 week period, beginning May 8.

BFS is slightly concerned about donations by not having in-church worship during the summer months. Many friends and members and visitors do not pledge, but donate at worship services. We broadcast our worship services on Facebook Live, YouTube, and on the Union Church website. We also have a Donate or Give button on our website, but we are not seeing the amount of giving for our on-line worship services that we hoped for.

The Community Meal program has changed and increased. Meals are now prepared for about 70-80 persons. They are picked up curbside or in some cases delivered by volunteers. There is a core of 3 or 4 people who do all the work. Donations for the meals and support from others for this ministry has been wonderful and much appreciated.

Union Church is not "closed", it is just different and feels a little strange.

How can you donate to Union Church, without being physically at Union Church? There are numerous of ways to do this.

1. Write a check and mail it to Union Congregational Church, UCC, Attn. Financial Secretary, PO Box 10, Hackensack MN 56452

2. Set up a scheduled electronic fund transfer payment of pledge or donation amount through you bank or credit union. Talk to them and fill out an ACH form and get it signed by the church.

- 3. Talk to your bank or credit union about Check Free or Bill Pay services that they have.
- 4. Make payment of pledge, donations, or gifts from your IRA, 401(K) or other retirement saving plans.

We hope that you stay healthy and safe and look forward to the time when we can return to being closer together. But we also know that this pandemic will have a continuing effect and ramifications on how we will be the church in the future. Let us be open to and embrace these changes.

Love and Peace to You,

Don Hoppe, Chair of the Board of Financial Stewardship

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• For those who do not watch us on the internet and just have email. Streamyard records the services in audio so that we can send the audio service out through email every week. You should be able to just click on it and it will play.

Please remember, we are learning as we go. Sometimes we try things and are surprised by our success and other times we fail miserably. This is all very new to us, so please extend grace and be patient.

I still miss the in-person worship, but we will be meeting again soon. I would much rather look at your lovely faces than a dot on a camera.

In Christ Alone,

Pastor Torri





CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING - MAY 21, 2020

Council PRESENT: Pastor Torri, Don Hoppe, Heidi Hoppe, Jo Horak, Joni Kumpula, Caryl Allan, Mike Bohannon. By zoom: Karen Holle, Tom Cox, Sabbastian Wilson-Webb, Ron Merritt

Joni called the meeting to order. Pastor Torri offered a convening prayer. The agenda was approved with one change. The minutes were accepted as written. Heidi/Tom

<u>Woock-Ness Property</u> – This discussion included Bruce Carlson by phone. Burton Woock is concerned that if Union Church does not remain viable, the property he gave the church would become the property of the Minnesota UCC Conference. If that happens, the Minnesota Conference could make decisions regarding the property that Burton would not agree with. Bruce Carlson has suggested that if the church were to get an environmental easement for the property, the property could belong to someone else with stipulations that Union could use it for VBS, for hiking and snowshoeing, among other things. This protects the land from development even if the church folds. Bruce Carlson offered to fund the long and expensive process of obtaining an environmental easement. Motion: To explore the possibility of obtaining an environmental easement for the Woock-Ness property. Heidi/Linda/passed

Don Hoppe, Bruce Carlson, Joni Kumpula, Mike Bohannon and John Sumption (county environmental services, retired; consultant to Northern Waters Land Trust) will meet to talk about this process.

Pastor's Monthly Report: Torri submitted her monthly report for all of us to read.

Coronavirus Discussion: Torri asked for a discussion of what groups we feel comfortable having meet in the church at this time, as the Governor has relaxed rules a bit about people getting together. We came up with the following policy for the church regarding use of space here:

USE OF CHURCH POLICY DURING CORONAVIRUS – MAY 21, 2020

At the May 21 Council meeting, the following policy was decided upon for the use of the church:

Worship: The Sanctuary and/or Friendship Hall will not be open to worshippers with the exception of the worship team involved in helping with the service. Services can be watched virtually on Facebook, U-Tube, or on our Website. This decision will be re-visited at the June Council meeting.

It is okay for groups of 10 or fewer people to use the Friendship Hall for Bible Study, Men's or Women's Ministry, or church business meetings. Masks are encouraged, people must sit 6 feet apart and tables and chairs need to be wiped down after the meeting.

Council agreed that there will be no private or personal use of the church at this time. (No Rentals)

Sunday church service: Torri discussed plans to improve the quality of the Sunday church services that we are watching virtually. Because a direct cable connection to the internet is available in the Friendship Hall, the services will be broadcast from that room. A new microphone has been purchased which will improve the quality of the audio pickup at the service. Heidi and Don Hoppe will be away for much of June and other folks need to be trained to help with the worship services.

<u>Financial Stewardship Board</u>: Don reported that our PPE loan was approved by the bank on May 8 and is for the amount of \$11,100. Our income for April was \$4,500 less than it had been in April of 2019. Our expenses for April this year were \$4,300 less than for last year at this time. Don is concerned about our income for June, July and August if we are not able to open the church for Sunday worship.

Food Ministry – In April we took in \$1500 for our meal program. In the past 10 weeks we have served 621 meals to people in our community through our Wednesday evening program. We will continue the meal program through June. Some donations are coming from people who don't use the program and some are coming from people who receive the meals. Everyone is very grateful for a good meal.

<u>Facilities</u>: Ron reported that the men recently picked up trash on highway 40. The process went very well. The cost for replacing the lower level doors seem to be prohibitive. We will not consider that project at this time. Gavin P. will work on our roof and soffits in the fall. Gordy will go ahead and order the two furnaces we need. Johanna can't get the old lawn mower going this year. Ron will be looking for a replacement. Ron is looking for a lawn service that will spray our dandelions. Don asked that Ron make sure the spray does not kill pollinators.

<u>Personnel Board</u>: Our semi-annual meeting is coming up soon and there will be elections of officers and board and ministry team reports to compile. Joni asked us to be thinking about that.

<u>Ministry Team Reports: Congregational Life</u>: The CL team has been restructured so that people on the team make calls to people in the congregation. We are making sure folks are doing well and can know about the church internet services. Callers check to see if there are prayer requests or other needs we can help with.

<u>Worship</u>: The Worship team is working hard to make the Sunday services enjoyable for everyone. Each week both Heidi's and Torri's computers are being used for the service. Torri feels that we need to purchase a church computer so we are not relying on private computers for important matters. Council agreed that we will purchase a church computer. Sabbastian, Don and Stan will decide what we should buy.

Christian Learning: Jo reminded us that VBS has been cancelled for this year and youth have been notified.

Scholarship team has chosen two candidates to award our church scholarship to. The youth will each receive \$1,000 after completing a successful first semester at college.

The meal program is doing well. Jo thanked the team: Sue Johnson, Mike Bohanon, Don Hoppe, Jo Horak and Caryl Allan. The program is extended through June.

Treasure Sale may happen in August this summer. We will see how the summer progresses.

Moderator Notes: Joni reminded us to be patient, be kind, wear our masks, stay vigilant!! Better days are coming!!

Newsletter Deadline: Tuesday, May 26

Meeting adjourned. Clerk: Karen Holle

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR AND THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Dear Friends,

The Leadership Council of Union Congregational met on Thursday, May 21st. One of the items we discussed is a question that is on everyone's mind, "When can we worship together again?". There are many opinions about this question and I wanted to take some time let you all know our stance.

INPERSON WORSHIP

The UCC Minnesota Conference has asked all churches in our denomination to not have in-person worship services until mid July. We (Union) will follow their recommendation. We will reassess our situation during the next Leadership Council meeting June 18th to discuss whether we can open earlier. We are working hard on streaming our Sunday service so it is easy to view. This week we will not only be live on Facebook, but you can also watch us on youtube.com and our church's website (www.unioncchackensack.com). We have purchased some new equipment to make the video less "glitchy" and the sound better. Our hope is to create a clear message of love and encouragement through this new medium.

Ministry and Business Groups

It is the Leadership Council's decision to have groups of <u>10 or fewer people to use the Friendship Hall</u> for Men's Fellowship, Women's Fellowship, Bible Study and any committees that normally meet. I ask that Sabbastian's office and the Library remain off-limits for now. We ask and highly recommend everyone to wear masks, space 6 feet apart and wipe down tables, chairs and any surfaces used.

Our hope is to create a sense of community in a safe way. We will be cautious and move slowly, not because we are fearful, but because we want to protect and develop a place where everyone feels comfortable. If you do not feel comfortable coming to the church, that is okay. We will continue to connect through phone calls and outdoor visits as well.

CAESAR'S TALES

Hi, my name is Caesar and I THINK I AM STILL the "church dog". I am not really sure lately. I go to work at the building, but I do not see my people as often. I use to see people all the time. It was my job to greet them and sniff them, but I do not get to do that much right now. I think I have been "laid off"!

So, I have decided to take a part time job as a "hunting dog". I am now a hunter! My days are filled with chasing down chipmunks, squirrels, mice and even snakes. It is great fun! I spend most of my time outside sniffing in rain tubes and under the noisy square box my human calls the air conditioner.

I only hunt in my backyard, but that is okay. I am familiar with the territory and I am very good at laying on the cement and waiting patiently for my prey, but sometimes I fall asleep. Being a hunting dog is hard work!

I think I am still a "church dog", but I think it is okay to do something different. It is my new normal for a little while. I do not think I want to be a "hunting dog" forever, but it is okay for now. I am learning new skills and new ways of interacting with my human.

I sometimes think of the people at church. I wonder how they are and what they are doing. Are they finding new hobbies like me? Are they learning new things about themselves? Are they hunting chipmunks? I just hope they are finding this time to do something they love.

To all my people: I love you!

Have a barky day!

Caesar "the Church Dog" (and temporary "hunting dog")



Worship News

Hope this finds you well and enjoying beautiful early summer weather. We could use some rain in Hackensack – many of the local lakes are low, and the gardens require daily watering.

I wanted to talk about safety this month.

I trust you have a mask (or several, depending upon how often you leave home), I hope you are using it every time you leave your home, and I encourage you to launder it every time it is used.

-Heidi Hoppe

Celebrating the Past – Myra Damm, historian

I have wondered how long it took before the church began to take form here in Hackensack. Lothrup was the first town that was formed because of the logging industry. Lothrup was a busy, thriving center of the late 1880's. It had a thriving downtown with many businesses. Trains loaded with logs for the mills came thru Lothrup every fifteen minutes. When the railroad pushed north Lothrup was abandoned, with some folks moving to Walker, Cass Lake, and others came to Hackensack.

It was 1902 when Hackensack was officially put on the map. Surveyor William Spain Sr. made the first plat of Hackensack in 1904. At this time the depot was moved from Lothrop to Hackensack.

It didn't take long for the people to start coming to the area. The train made four stops a day in Hackensack. Two trains went north, two went south. The train brought many settlers to the area along with many tourists. As the population grew the town also grew to keep up with the needs of the people.

What has this got to do with church?

In 1902 Hackensack became official, and in 1904 the Congregational Church was formed with a series of meetings held by Rev. Allen Clark, general missionary of the Congregational Home Missionary Society. Meetings were held in the Otterson Hotel, and in homes. Our church organization was completed in 1907, and a regular pastor Rev. George W. Sheets was chosen. The church was admitted to the Conference. We were official!

Looking at these dates, it seems that there was much growth in the area. The information about the early days of Lothrup came from the Hackensack History book called the Celebrating 100 years from 1903 to 2003.

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Below is the new church policy during COVID-19. May God keep you and protect you. May Christ surround you and comfort you, and may the Holy Spirit give you guidance and strength.

Blessing to you all,

Pastor Torri Vande Zande

Joni Kumpula - Moderator of Church Leadership Council

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CHRISTIAN LEARNING

Dear Members and Friends,

There is a famous quote from a famous book that goes something like this – "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times" – This appears to be one of those times!

Christian Learning has to make almost weekly changes in our events calendar, as have other church groups. Here's the most recent list of activities:

Monday Morning Bible Study will meet using a new format. We had talked about it before COVID-19 and now seemed a time to try it. We hope to gather in the beautiful outdoors of gardens, yards, patios, decks, driveways, and more. Appreciate God's Creation! Our first meeting was the Monday Gov. Waltz gave permission for ten or less to gather inside. We chose to meet OUTDOORS but still all practiced social distancing, wore masks, and used hand/ table sanitizer. All were welcome, but each made choice to attend. Bonnie was Lesson Leader, and Barb hostess. A schedule for outdoor group gatherings will be established soon - we plan to try it for the Summer. At the Council Meeting later, we and other church groups were given permission to meet in the Union Church Friendship Hall as long as social distancing, masks, and table sanitizer are used. Ten or less may gather.

Monday Morning Bible Study Group meets at 10:30 AM and uses Upper Room materials. Bonnie will contact members with the location for June 6th. Safety precautions will be taken.

As noted last month, the **Union Church VBS Program** scheduled for June 2020 has been rescheduled for next year. All kids, parents, and staff have been notified. We plan an even bigger and better VBS next time!

Our annual **Treasure Sale** will not be held in June or July this year. We are working with Sacred Heart and the Chamber of Commerce on an August date, but much depends on future health plans. We appreciate all items already received, and please keep us in mind if you have something special to share. Great fun can be had with all those treasures!

Lots of creative minds work on this project, and we always welcome more of them! Let's support youth and families!

Finally, to all the kids, parents, other family members, teachers, health care workers, first responders, farmers, drivers, faith leaders, community officials, and all the rest of the fabric of society – God is always with you, and so are we. Together is the key word! Let your light shine!

COMMUNITY MEALS REPORT

Free Meals are available between 4:00–5:30 PM on Wednesdays at the West Upper Level door. Reservations are requested by Tuesday at noon weekly. Please contact Sue or Jo (651-274-2145) with meal numbers, allergies, and pick-up or delivery options.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the lives of members and friends of Union Church changed in ways we could not imagine. Stores and schools closed; jobs were lost, and relationships became socially distant. The Christian Learning Team and Executive Board of Union Church agreed to sponsor a meal program with a pick-up and delivery system to benefit many community members. Healthy, delicious meals are prepared in our upper level commercial kitchen by Sue and Mike on a weekly basis.

Jo does prep and pick-up. All of us are graduates of the kitchen safety class. Teamwork has been positive! Don and Caryl are faithful delivery drivers and extra support folks. Pastor Torri offers prayers for all. During this time we can observe extra safety practices as well. Goal is to have all remain healthy as possible. A good meal certainly helps! Just seeing friends (at a safe distance) lifts spirits as well!

Since mid-March we have served 620 meals! What a number! Breakdown stats show about 45% youth and families, with 55% elders. If you want a tasty meal you don't have to shop for/cook it yourself! Menu varies but the stuffed pork loin has been a favorite so far. Thanks to Sue and Mike for creative meal planning! This is a true Mission Project to benefit all community members! Any donations received help to support the 60-80 hot meals/desserts served weekly and are much appreciated.

Community Meals will continue until the end of June. Prayers of support and hope come with each meal! We are all in this together!

HACKENSACK — BACKUS RELIEF FUND

The Hackensack Lakes Area Community Foundation is proud to announce the new Hackensack-Backus Relief Fund. We stand ready to meet critical needs in the Hackensack and Backus area as we face the sweeping and unprecedented effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hosted by the Initiative Foundation on GiveMN, this fund is being used to makes grants to nonprofits, local units of government and small businesses to address the economic impacts of reduced and lost work resulting from the outbreak; to meet immediate needs of economically vulnerable populations caused by coronavirus-related closures; and to respond to increased demands placed on our stressed social support systems. Over the long-term, the fund will support recovery needs that will inevitably arise.

Gifts to this fund can support services that help those whose jobs are affected or will be affected in the near future. In the first three days that the fund was live, we raised \$1,500 and by the first week of May, over \$4,000. In the first two weeks, the HLACF granted \$500 each to four small businesses and one non-profit. Our hope is that you will join us in growing this fund for maximum local impact. Visit <u>https://www.givemn.org/story/Hackensack-</u><u>Backus-Relief</u> to donate or access the grant application. This is a wonderful opportunity for those that summer in the area, vacation in the area, or resort in the area to provide a financial contribution to support our organizations. Your contribution small or large would be greatly appreciated. We expect that the relief fund will continue to support our area through at least September of this year.

Author Kris Biessener

Memorial Scholarship Award

We are pleased to recognize these outstanding students for the 2020 Memorial Scholarship Award:

- Gabriel Michael Lohr
- Rachel Diane Pitt

Gabe plans to attend the University of Minnesota with an emphasis in biological sciences; his long range plans may include medical school. He is an active member of Union Church and the grandson of Stan and Joni Kumpula. Congratulations to Gabe and his family!

Rachel has enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and plans to major in business marketing. Future goals are to obtain a Masters degree and eventually return to manage the family business, Bailey's Resort. Best wishes to Rachel and her family!

Scholarship History: The Joseph L. Major Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 1983 by Josephine Major in memory of her husband. Later this was combined with the George Hoppe Scholarship Fund under the current name. Since that time, the fund has grown with by the addition of gifts in memory of many members and friends of Union Congregational Church. Interest received from these gifts is distributed on an annual basis.

Eligibility: The applicant is a graduating high school senior of an area school who is entering a post-secondary education program.

Award is based on:

- 1. Completed application
- 2. Three Letters of Recommendation
- 3. An official 4 year transcript

Announcement of Award is made in Spring, but the actual financial award is not made until end of first semester of study with an official transcript of 2.0 GPA or the equivalent. The scholarship amount is \$1,000 with no more than two given this year. Award ceremony is planned for 2021.

The Scholarship Ministry Team Jo Horak, Chair, Pastor Torri Vande Zande, Don Hoppe, Caryl Allen, and Cindy Gulbrandson

In Memory of George Floyd: What Shall We Say as Church?

by Rev. Shari Prestemon, Conference Minister



"Please. Please. I can't breathe."

That desperate plea was among the last words spoken by George Floyd, a black man who was killed on Monday night at the corner of 38th and Chicago Avenue in Minneapolis.

After being detained & handcuffed by police on a non-violent charge, one policeman ground his knee into the back of Mr. Floyd's neck and held it there for approximately eight minutes while other officers stood watching.

Mr. Floyd's appeals for help all went unanswered and he appeared to lose consciousness before an ambulance arrived to take him to Hennepin County Medical Center, where he later died.

Family members and friends now grieve the bitter, brutal loss of their loved one. Protesters have taken to the streets. News reporters are casting a spotlight on the horrific, truth-telling video. And social media is blow-

ing up with outrage.

But what shall we say as Church?

We must unequivocally affirm that George Floyd's life mattered. His black life mattered. He was a precious Child of God.

We must confess that the evil scourge of white supremacy, historically aided and abetted by the Christian Church and its self-avowed faithful, has pressed its full weight into the necks of black bodies for centuries and is still actively doing so.

We must lament our own complicity in systems that privilege many of us while those same systems from which we benefit oppress and kill communities of color.

We must let the cry of Amos roar from our pulpits and pour out into our streets: "let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos 5:24)

We must declare that the Jesus we follow, who preached in word and deed the love of neighbor, care for the least of these, and abundant mercy, would weep and rage over George Floyd's brutal, needless death. Because George Floyd begged for mercy and was given none. George Floyd asked for water and was denied. George Floyd cried in pain and was subjected to yet more pain. George Floyd said he couldn't breathe, and he died.

In the name of Jesus Christ, in whose name we worship, we must say "no more." We must call for change and demand justice. We must be the change we say we want. We must join with the prophet Amos to "seek good and not evil", to "hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate" (5:14-15)

Beloved, may it be so.





BY TED STRAND

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED

Check inside for updates on Union Church and COVID-19, as well as a special message from the conference minister.

2020



