



# 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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## AUGUST 2021

Notes from  
Rev. Torri Vande Zande

### Bugs!

I have been at Union Congregational for almost 3 years. I have learned many things along the way - however, one of the most important things I have learned is that Minnesota has a lot of bugs!

I was educated when I first moved here about ticks. How to check for ticks, how to remove a tick, what to use to repel ticks, and what to do if you get bitten by a tick. It was quite the education! Then tick season ended and mosquito season started! I hate mosquitos and mosquito spray. I think it stinks. So, I was told to try tea tree oil. Well, the tea tree oil smells worse than the spray, so most of the time I just opt for getting bit.

So once the dragonflies hatch and eat all the mosquitos, I am a pretty happy person... until the deer flies come around! Within seconds I have at least one orbiting my head, and if I spend more than ten minutes outside, I will have three to five of them having a party in my hair. So, I have two choices; I can either tape a disposable cup to my hat or put dryer sheets in my pockets and tie one to my baseball hat. I opted for the dryer sheets. It surprisingly works!

So why am I telling you all this?

Life is full of bugs. Just when you think you have one under control, another hatches. There is always something that we need to fix or need to adapt to. Bugs in life take many forms. Some bugs look like a car that needs to be fixed, a pet who can't stop chewing on our shoes, or a skin condition we can't find the right medication for. Bugs are everyday annoyances that take up time and energy out of our day and distract us from what really needs to have our attention.

In Philippians 4:8-9, Paul tells his friends:

*⁹Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ¹⁰Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.*

So, I need to ask myself, "What do these verses mean to me as I deal with all the bugs in my life?"

These verses remind me that I must look past the annoying bugs and try to find the positive elements in the situation. If I allowed the ticks, mosquitos, and deer flies to rule my life, I would miss out on some beautiful hikes through the woods. I would not be as physically active and be at risk for health issues. When I focus

**Sunday Worship at 9:30 AM**

**Communion: First Sunday each Month**

**Church Staff**

Pastor.....Rev. Torri Vande Zande  
 Office Administrator.....Linda Ottman  
 Secretary/Tech.....Sabbastian Wilson-Webb  
 Financial Secretary.....Don Hoppe  
 Treasurer.....Sheryl Kaubisch  
 Bell Choir Director.....Heidi Hoppe  
 Organists.....Sheryl Kaubisch  
 Pianist.....Kathleen Millberg, Barb Nish  
 Custodian.....Sue Johnson

**Church Council**

Moderator.....Mike Bohanon  
 Vice-Moderator.....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

on the true, honorable, just, and pure things in life, the bugs fall along the roadside and I become less distracted.

My hope for the rest of the summer is to be less focused on the bugs and more focused on the hike, more focused on my health, and more focused on the positive. And if you ever want to go walking with me, you are welcome to join me... we will battle the bugs together.

Pastor Torri

**AUGUST BIRTHDAYS**

August 7	Donna Foust
August 8	Cindy Cressy Shelly Knuths Hallie Pond
August 9	Helen Schaefer
August 10	Marlene Hensel Marcus Larson Jack Loftus
August 12	Barb Adams Tom Cox
August 15	Mary Lou Bauer
August 16	Rod Owre
August 18	Linda Kaiser
August 19	Elinor Chase Joyce Rubitschung
August 24	Beth Trout
August 29	Arlene Caterino
August 30	Sheryl Kaubisch
August 31	Linda Merritt



**Copies of the Semi-Annual Report are available to be picked up at the church, or to be emailed or mailed if requested.**



## “Holding Relationships as Sacred” – Public Forum Sunday August 8th

By Tom Cox and Sue Kimmel

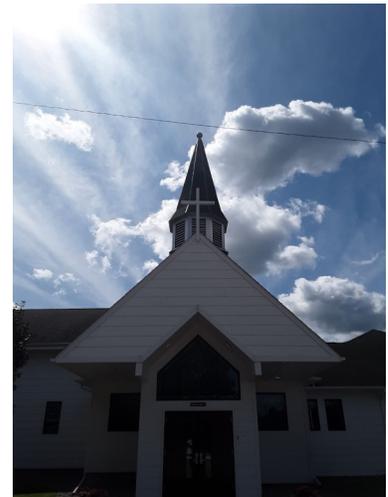
Our congregation’s Justice Ministry Team cordially invites one and all to its second public forum of the summer, *Holding Relationships Sacred*. **August 8<sup>th</sup>, the second Sunday in August**, is the date. **10:45 A.M.**, following worship, is the time. The session will last about an hour, including time for discussion.

With our focus on encouraging understanding between the local, seasonal, and Native American communities, we have invited Joy Persall, leadership coach and strategic organizational consultant, to be our speaker. Ms. Persall holds an M.A. in Organization Management and Development. As a woman of Ojibwe Metis’ descent, mother, grandmother, gardener, and seed keeper, she is a gardener of people, teams, and organizations. Her consulting addresses the need of organizations and their leadership for support in creating change, managing transitions, and developing leaders in diverse communities. She believes in taking a seed germ of understanding and growing it into something that we would have never known, developing our ability to listen and learn as we create new solutions in a grounded atmosphere of human dignity and respect. Ms. Persall brings a depth and breadth of experience in leading change toward equitable and inclusive systems by believing in our power to look within ourselves, and to listen to all voices with a sense of curiosity. These are all timely themes, both for our congregation and for our wider community.

Union’s Justice Ministry Team cordially invites and encourages all Union Church members and friends, and the public, including both permanent and seasonal residents, to come to this special event on August 8<sup>th</sup>.



Photo from our last public forum held in Friendship Hall.



**Bible Study**  
 Monday mornings  
 Ellie Nelson’s home

10:00 Coffee and conversation

10:30 to 11:30 Education and Inquiry.



**GAME NIGHTS**

August 8th and 22nd  
 5:30-8:00pm  
 Brink a snack to share!



## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – JULY 15, 2021

**PRESENT:** Caryl Allan, Don Hoppe, Pastor Torri Vande Zande, Heidi Hoppe, Cindy Gulbrandson, Tom Cox, Ron Merritt, Mike Bohanon, Stan Kumpula, Joni Kumpula, Karen Holle, Marilyn and Steve Erickson

Joni Kumpula called the meeting to order. Pastor Torri offered a convening prayer. The agenda was approved as written. Tom/Heidi. Minutes of the last meeting were approved. Heidi/Cindy

**Pastor's Monthly Report to Council:** Pastor Torri has been doing a lot of community work this month. She has been working hard to make sure people in the community know about the plan to build a dog park in Hackensack and to raise funds for it. She also organized the "pet parade," part of the Sweetheart Day parade that featured 32 dogs and one chicken wearing a sombrero!

There are several new people coming to our services that Torri would like us to reach out to.

**Financial Stewardship:** Don reported that giving income for the first 6 months of 2021 is \$69,458 which is \$14,374 less than in 2020. This income difference has been covered by a carryover of \$19,537 from last year. For the remainder of 2021 the estimated giving income is about \$58,000, which makes our total giving for 2021 about \$138,000. Our budget for 2021 is \$169,883. Additional income will come from the Treasure Sale, building use fees, and other miscellaneous giving and income. Don is projecting a balanced budget for 2021 but does not expect a carryover for 2022.

**Facilities:** Ron reported that a total of \$10,700 was spent on our new stove which includes the stove itself and the cost of hooking the stove up. Some of the cost of the stove came from our Bequests and Special Gifts fund, and the rest came from a member of the church. The old stove has been listed on-line for sale.

Woock-Ness Property – Joni would like to continue to be the liaison for the Woock-Ness Property conservation easement. Motion to approve: Heidi/Cindy/passed.

**Ministry Team Reports: Outreach:** Karen reported that the current mission of the month is Paws + Claws. The large wooden bin in the church entryway has been filled with dog toys and blankets for the organization. Any monies collected this month for the mission will be forwarded to Paw + Claws.

The next two months we will be focusing on Church Stewardship and will not promote an outside mission.

**Congregational Life:** Now that Joni is finished with her job as Moderator of the church, she will be taking over leadership of Congregational Life. She will call a meeting soon to re-assess who needs contact and who needs visitation.

**Worship:** Heidi reported that the Bell Choir is practicing and will play August 1. Sarah and Tom Cox will preach this Sunday as Pastor Torri is on vacation. With more people coming to services we need regular greeters and ushers.

**Women's Fellowship:** There will not be a women's fellowship meeting in August. Instead, on August 1 from 1:00 to 3:00 there will be a housewarming party for Pastor Torri and Koda and Bandit at Torri's house. If you would like to purchase a gift for Torri, there is a list on the bulletin board of items she would like. Men and women are invited to join in the fun and to bless Torri's new home.

**Men's Fellowship:** Stan reported that Bruce Carlson came to the last meeting and gave a wonderful presentation about the fish life on Ten Mile Lake. Next month the meeting will highlight the Cass County Triad program. On Monday of next week the men will build a fence at Torri's new home for Koda.

**Christian Learning:** Jo Horak was not present today. Cindy and Heidi were both involved in the Vacation Bible School program and reported that only 9 children attended this year. Those who came had a wonderful time!! There may be a re-design of the program for next year. The national UCC organization requires background checks

for anyone who works with children or vulnerable adults. This will be a focus for us if we continue to have programs for children at our church.

Justice Ministry Team: We hosted a wonderful community forum last Sunday which was attended by about 70 people.

Representatives from the Game Changers and from the Hackensack Lakes Area Community Foundation spoke about the work their groups are doing toward the betterment of Hackensack. Additionally, Bill Kennedy, mayor of Hackensack, spoke about improvements underway for First Street in Hackensack and also about road changes that may come in the next few years.

Coming up on August 8, the forum will feature Joy Persall of the Native American Community. Then on September 12, there will be a forum featuring the Leech Lake Culture Alliance.

In addition, the Justice Ministry Team is promoting attendance at the Leech Lake Culture Alliance 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Autumn Equinox Unity Day Celebration and Potluck Evening at the Onigum Community Center on Tuesday, September 21.

Treasure Sale: Cindy reported that people are borrowing the tables that we recently bought for our treasure sale. There is concern that tables may be damaged by being loaned out and really need to be signed out and only loaned to members of the church.

Moderator's moment:: Today is Joni's last Council meeting to chair. Mike Bohanon will be taking over as Moderator at the semi-annual meeting. Today Marilyn and Steve attended the Council meeting as Vice Moderators. They will take over as Moderators in two years.

Joni has been Moderator of our church for many years and told us that, "It has been a joy." Thank you, Joni, for all your hard work for us and for the church!

Old business: Video streaming: Don reported that his team has not met to discuss this yet, but will soon. The quality of our video streaming needs improvement.

## CELEBRATING THE PAST—Myra Damm, Historian

### Additions to UCC

Plans for a new addition to the church were discussed, plans drawn and redrawn in the mid seventies until it was decided to go ahead and build.

An article from the Walker paper dated 1978, shows a picture of Jesse Green and Rev. Arden Johnson at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new addition. A portion of the article is as follows:

“The church addition which will be roughed in this Fall and completed in Spring, was necessitated by the steadily increasing membership and attendance of recent years which regularly, especially in summer months, exceeded the 222 total Hackensack village population. For the past several years double church services have been held from May to October.

The new addition will nearly triple the main floor sanctuary space of the church. It will increase the pew seating space from 110 to 285. We can easily seat 300 in the new building, whereas our capacity in the old church was severely strained by attending crowds of 150 or more at many individual services.

This addition will include extending the church basement facilities. The three new classrooms will provide privacy and quiet for Sunday School classes and their teachers, who formerly had to meet in one big room. Serving facilities will be greatly enhanced for various fellowship meetings, dinners, and bazaars.”

This is the first addition that was added to the church. Another addition followed later which will be covered in later reports. A motto I read in one of the reports was: “We continue to move forward into the future as a welcoming friendly place to worship. “

## THROUGH KODA'S EYES



Hi, my name is Koda, and I am the "Church Dog (In Training)." There has been a lot of change in my life over this past month! I am getting used to my new house, and I love all the room I have to run and play inside. My human did not let me run around in the yard for the first several weeks. She said it was not safe for me because I did not have a fence to keep me safe. I was sad that I could not run free or chase the bunnies I see all the time from the window.

A few weeks ago, my human and I went on a long car ride to see our human family for a week. I had a fun time. I got to meet several new dog friends and eat a lot of treats that my human's brother gave me.

When we got back to our new home, my human opened the door to the backyard. I did not need a leash or a rope on my collar. She just told me to go outside. I hesitated at first because I was scared, but then I saw a wide-open yard and realized I was free to run! When I got to the bottom of the stairs, I saw THE FENCE!

I was so excited! I ran around the garage, I ran around the tree, and I ran around the birdfeeder! Then I ran around the garage again before I laid down in the grass and enjoyed the sunshine. It was great! I am so happy!



My human told me there was a group of men who came over while we were gone and put in this amazing fence! They were from a group called "Men's Fellowship." I do not know what fellowship means, but I bet it has something to do with fence building!



Anyway, I just wanted to tell you about my amazing new fence! I can run safely now, play and chase the bunnies I see through the window. I have not caught one yet, but I will one day!

That is how I see things through my eyes. I hope you all have a place to run and play like I do. I love my new space. Thank you!

Barks and wiggles,

Koda (Church Dog in Training)

P.S. Note: I also wanted to update you all on the lava lamp that is in the window. My human realized that the lava lamp does not show up very well in the window when the sun is shining. So, she decided to still put the lava lamp on, but also put the driveway light on also so people will know that they can stop by. So, look for the lava lamp and the light that is on the side of the house that lights up the driveway!



## CHRISTIAN LEARNING REPORT

Once Vacation Bible School finishes for the year, the Christian Learning Team is ready for a break. When school begins in the fall, programming for youth and families will continue on Wednesday evenings, we hope, with a meal and meaningful time spent together.

Summer Forum Schedule: By this time the first presentation by Balsam Moon will have happened. Part II of the Balsam Moon presentation on Living Sustainably will be held at Balsam Moon in Pine River on August 7<sup>th</sup>.

On August 8, Joy Persall will be our featured speaker during coffee hour. Ms. Persall holds an M.A. in Organization Management and Development. As a woman of Ojibwe Metis' descent, mother, grandmother, gardener, and seed keeper, she is a gardener of people, teams, and organizations. Her consulting addresses the need of organizations and their leadership for support in creating change, managing transitions, and developing leaders in diverse communities. This forum was arranged by the Justice Ministry Team.

Then on Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup> the Minnesota Adult/Teen Challenge Program will present songs from a 30 member choir mixed with powerful stories about overcoming addiction. A full brunch will follow for all present. Please give your support to all these wonderful Forums!

### Memorial Scholarship Team

Last year, again due to Covid-19, we were not able to make a presentation in person to our Scholarship Award candidates. However, funds were released after the first of the year 2021 when our two candidates submitted transcripts showing a 2.00 GPA or better. Those candidates are Gabe Lohr and Rachel Pitt. We wish them continued success in their future career paths. Candidates for the year 2022 are in a review process and given time to complete forms.

### The Christian Learning Programs Under Review

Last spring Council determined the Morning Out Program for young preschoolers had experienced low numbers and voted to close it. We are hoping to find ways to engage youth and families in the life of the church to build a base for our church future. Meanwhile, we all appreciate the support given by various church groups to Youth and Families Programs.



# FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

## Notes from the Board of Financial Stewardship

We are well into the summer months, and the weather has been warm but very dry. As we enter August, we begin our Stewardship Campaign for 2022. The theme is **“The Journey from Gratitude to Generosity.”**

During this time, we ask you to prayerfully consider everything for which you are grateful. Consider seriously what Union Church means to you, and please be as generous as possible as you make a pledge or commitment to support our church.

As for 2021, the giving to Union Church is significantly less than last year at this time. We hope to make our budget, but we need to watch our expenses, and pledges and giving to Union will need to be completed.

I am attaching a portion of the Board of Financial Stewardship report that was included in the Semi-Annual Report for the July congregational meeting. Please read and if you have questions, please do not hesitate to talk to members of the board.

## BOARD OF FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

### 2021 budget:

#### **A. Income:**

- Giving income for the first 6 months, including prepaid pledges, is \$69,458, which is \$14,374 less than 2020. This income difference has been covered by a carryover of \$19,537 from last year.
- For the remainder of 2021, the estimated giving income is about \$58,000 (this estimate is very tentative, difficult to estimate), which makes our giving total for the year about \$138,000.
- Our budget for 2021 is \$169,883. Additional income will come from Treasure Sale, building use, and other miscellaneous income and giving.

#### **B. Expenses:**

- Expenses for the first 6 months of 2021 were \$78,850.
- We are projecting about normal expenses for the rest of 2021. Budgeted expenses for 2021 are \$169,883

**We are anticipating that we will have a balanced budget for 2021, but we will have little carryover for 2022.**

### Reserve & Non Budget Funds:

In 2020 we used Reserve MRI funds for furnaces and other building costs and repairs, and entered 2021 with zero Reserve MRI funds. Only available Memorial Scholarship funds were used in 2021 for two \$1,000 scholarships.

Conservative investments have increased the dividends for Bequests & Special Gifts and the Memorial Scholarship funds versus the previous CD's. Overall, the Reserve and Non-Budget Funds have had a small increase during the first six months of 2021.

At the Semi-annual Meeting in January 2021, it was decided that Non-Budget funds that were being carried by boards, committees, and ministry teams would be transferred to our general church account. If additional funds above the approved budget are needed, funds would need to be requested and approved by the Board of Financial Stewardship and/or the Church Council.

### Financial Board Summary:

We have continued to manage our operating finances by a small margin over the last several years. It is only by our members' and friends' continued support that we continue to have a balanced budget. In 2020 the PPP loan which we received and the generous giving, above pledges, allowed us to enter 2021 with a very good carryover. Our current situation is more concerning. We used that carryover to cover our proposed budget for 2021. We have received new members, but unfortunately, we have lost members to death and moving in the last few years, and this has impacted our finances. We have good funds in our reserve accounts of Bequests and Special Gifts, Memorial Scholarship, and Memorials, but these are long

-term accounts, and the principal cannot be used without congregational approval. In August we will begin our Stewardship Campaign for 2022. We hope everyone will prayerfully consider your giving and pledge to Union Church so that we can continue to be the vital and responsive church in our community. If you have any questions regarding this report, please feel free to talk to any of the Financial Stewardship Board members.

Christ's Love and Peace to You,

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

*"If you wait for the perfect moment when all is safe and assured, it may never arrive. Mountains will not be climbed, races won, or lasting happiness achieved."*

*Maurice Chevalier (1888-1972)*

*"Never think any oldish thoughts. It's oldish thoughts that make you old."*

*James A. Farley (1888-1976)*

### News from the Worship Ministry Team

I hope this newsletter finds you well and enjoying our warm (hot, actually, and very dry) summer. At least the mosquito population is down!

We're working to improve the streaming of our Sunday morning worship. The committee studying the video and sound quality of our service is meeting this week. I sincerely hope they can discover some (affordable) equipment which we can utilize! However, if you are having difficulty streaming our service on Sunday, I urge you to join us in person. The sound and "picture" are perfect!!

The vocal and bell choirs are meeting and performing each month, and Dick Kimmel was with us earlier this summer as well. I'm hoping more musicians will be able to join us.

We are always looking for volunteers to serve as Ushers, Greeters, Valets to park cars, and as members of the Sunday morning Tech Team. If you can help, please contact me, and we will put together a schedule that works for you. In addition, if you are interested in joining our Ministry Team, give me a call. We meet infrequently but are involved on Sunday.

Heidi Hoppe, Chair (218-831-3927)

Gracee Rudkin, Mary Parrish, Sheryl Kaubisch, Caryl Allan, Don Hoppe

## Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will not be meeting in August.

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, August 3rd at 9:00am 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).



## FIBER ARTS GROUP

Fiber Arts meets on the fourth Thursday from 1:00-3:00 pm each month for knitting, crocheting, quilting, tating, or whatever else you enjoy. Lots of help, treats, and giggling included!



## PRAYER REQUESTS

At Union, we email and print out a new prayer list every couple of weeks, filled with the concerns and praises of our congregation. How exactly do you get your prayer request on the prayer list?

- **Email us**—Email your prayer request to us at [unionucc401@gmail.com](mailto:unionucc401@gmail.com) with "Prayer Request" in the subject line.
- **Go to the prayer request page on our website**—Visit our prayer request page at [www.unioncchackensack.com/prayer-requests/](http://www.unioncchackensack.com/prayer-requests/) and fill out the easy-to-use form.
- **Call the church**—Office hours are 9:00 am-2:00 pm Monday-Thursday, and we will be happy to take your prayer request over the phone.

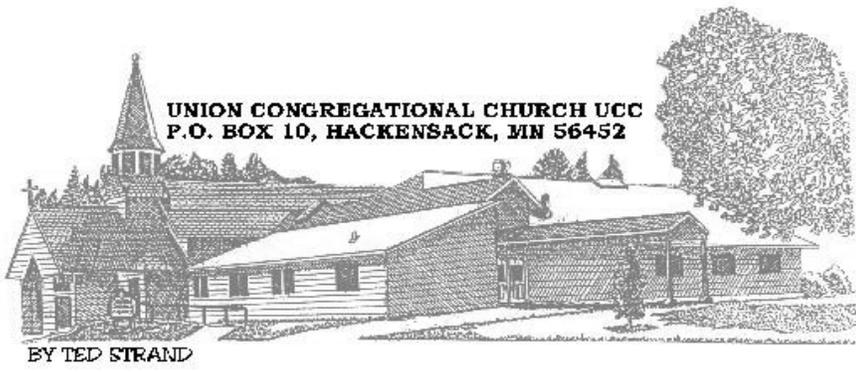
Bone Builders\* 1:30 pm -2:30 pm  
Every Monday and Friday

Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

# AUGUST 2021

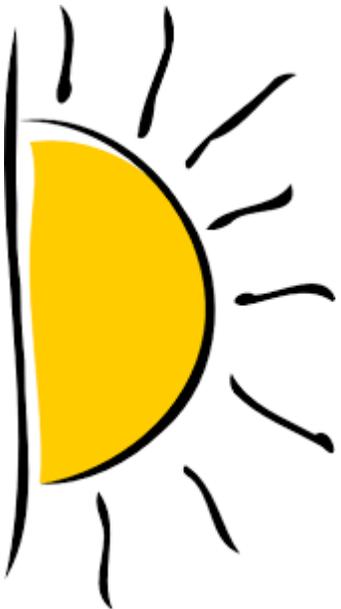
\* = Community Event held at the church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 1:00pm Housewarming for Pastor Torri	2 10:30am—12:00pm Bible Study 12:00pm VBS Meeting 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	3 9:00am Men's Group	4 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	5	6 1:30– Bone Builders *	7 8:00am Ten Mile Lake Associate Meeting* 9:30am Balsam Moon Event @ Balsam Moon*
8 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 10:45am Justice Team Forum 5:30 Game Night	9 10:30am—12:00pm Bible Study 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	10 10:00am Community Flea Market* 5:30pm Financial Team Meeting	11 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	12	13 1:30– Bone Builders *	14 Northwoods Arts Council d Art Festival*
15 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	16 10:30am—12:00pm Bible Study 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	17	18 7:00pm Zoom Book Study	19 1:00pm Church Council	20 1:30 Bone Builders *	21
22 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour 5:30 Game Night	23 10:30am—12:00pm Bible Study 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	24	25	26 1:00pm Fiber Arts*	27 1:30 Bone Builders *	28
29 9:30am Worship—MN Adult and Teen Challenge 10:30am Coffee Hour	30 10:30am—12:00pm Bible Study 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	31				



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Public forum info inside!

**2021**

