



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

<https://www.unioncchackensack.com>
Email: unionucc401@gmail.com

Toll Free: (888) 887-4820
Emergency Phone: (218) 507-1905



Inside this issue:

Notes from Rev. Torri Vande Zande	1-2
Birthdays	2
Adult Learning Report	3
Council Minutes	4-5
Mission of the Month	5,7,10
Through Koda's Eyes	6-7
Financial Stewardship	8
Worship Ministry	8
Celebrating the Past	9
Justice Team Ministry	9
Kokoro Corner	10
Calendar	11

Ash Wednesday is March 2nd

More details to follow.

MARCH 2022

Notes from Rev. Torri Vande Zande

Lent Reflections

I am only human. That's a phrase I have heard in various contexts. When someone makes a mistake they say, "I'm only human." When someone hurts someone's feelings they sometimes say, "I'm only human." When one finds a task that is impossible for them to finish, "I'm only human."

"I am only human" seems like an excuse sometimes to being not enough. In our humanity, there may be times when we think we are not smart enough, good enough, or strong enough. Being human means weakness.

This is the season of Lent. Lent is a 40-day season that comes right before Easter. It starts on Ash Wednesday and ends the Saturday before Holy Week (which is the week before Easter, which includes Psalm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter). It is a time we reflect on our humanity and the fragileness of this life and realize our need for God, our Creator.

Does that mean we are weak? No, I don't think so. I believe being reflective of who we are and what we are capable of... and what we are not capable of is a strength. Being human is knowing your strengths and weaknesses... and knowing

(Continued on page 2)



Sunday Worship at 9:30 AM

Communion: First Sunday each month

CHURCH COUNCIL

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

Community Meals.....	Jo Horak
Congregational Life.....	Joni Kumpula
Facilities.....	Mike Bohanon and Ron Merritt
Personnel.....	Marilyn McKnight
Worship.....	Heidi Hoppe
Men's Fellowship.....	Stan Kumpula
Women's Fellowship.....	Joni Kumpula
Outreach.....	Karen Holle
Treasure Sale.....	Cindy Gulbrandson
Justice Ministry Team.....	Sue Kimmel

A close-up photograph of a large, roaring fire burning in a fireplace. The flames are bright yellow and orange, rising from a bed of logs. The background is dark, showing a dimly lit room.

Happy Birthday



Karen Holle, Sabbastian Wilson-Webb, and Linda Ottman, Editors

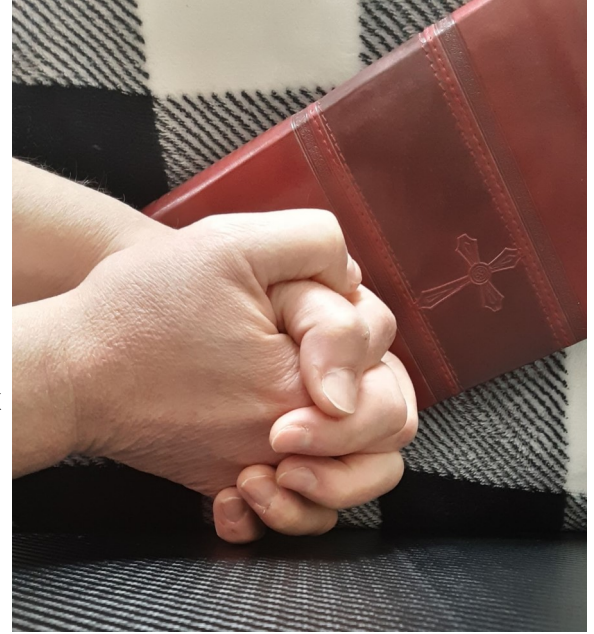
PRAYER REQUESTS

Sharing prayer requests and praying for one another is an important part of Union. We put together a Prayer Sheet every other week with concerns and updates on those whom we are praying for. If you would like to receive a prayer sheet, there are 3 different ways you can do so:

1. Hard copies are available at the church.
2. You can receive it through email. Please contact Linda at the office, and she will make sure you get one twice a month.
3. On our website go to "Contact Us." A dropdown box will show "Prayer List." A password is needed and you can get that from the church office or Pastor Torri. After you enter it once, you will not need it again. Due to personal content, we protect that information with a password.

If you have a prayer request and would like it added to our prayer sheet, please contact the church or Pastor Torri.

Please note: We will only share what people give permission to share. We do not share secondhand information.



NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

We are having a bit of "weather" today. The church office is closed because of the cold and blowing snow, and I think our driveway is blocked by drifting. A wonderful day to stay in and read a good book!

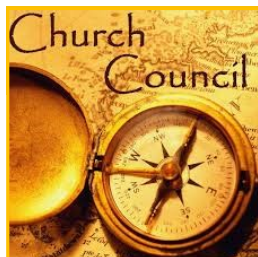
Lent has begun, and I'm happy to report we are again collaborating with St. Paul's Lutheran. In addition, some of the members from Sacred Heart will also be joining us. It will be like old times!

We will be streaming the Wednesday evening services from 5:30 - 6:00. As always, you can find them on our website, YouTube, or Facebook, and the broadcast will be archived and will be available at any time after the event.

We were privileged to have Marilyn McKnight Erickson fill the pulpit one Sunday in February. She ended her remarks with the following quote: "I am only one. But still I am one. I cannot do everything. But still I can do something. And because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something I can do." Always remember that you touch many lives with the little somethings you do each day. May we each find peace and harmony and purpose as we travel the Lenten journey together.
- Heidi Hoppe



A lovely visitor in our yard this week.



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

February 17, 2022

PRESENT: Marilyn Erickson, Steve Erickson, Joni Kumpula, Stan Kumpula, Heidi Hoppe, Don Hoppe, Karen Holle, Pastor Torri Vande Zande, Jo Horak, Mary Parrish, Cindy Gulbrandson, Sue Kimmel

Marilyn Erickson called the meeting to order in Mike Bohanon's absence.

Pastor Torri offered a convening prayer. The agenda was approved with one item added to New Business. The minutes of the last meeting were approved with one correction.

Pastor's Monthly Report: Torri submitted a written report to Council of her focus of work in the past month. Pastor Leif and Pastor Torri will be working together again on services that will start March 2 which is Ash Wednesday. People that come to the service at Union may enjoy a Community Meal in our Friendship Hall.

Facilities Board: No report

Personnel Board: Marilyn has met with Pastor Torri and Karen to discuss the responsibilities of the Board of Personnel. Prioritizing of projects is next.

Ministry Team Reports: Congregational Life: Joni reported on the work this board is doing to reach out to members of our congregation who need a call. She also mentioned that the Book and Thimble group has donated \$100 to the church for use of space.

Worship: Heidi reported that Marilyn Erickson preached last week, and Dick Kimmel has been providing music in Sheryl's absence. Thanks to both of these individuals!!

Adult Learning: The two projects of this group are currently the weekly Bible Study which meets Wednesdays in the Library and is reading the book "We Make the Road by Walking" by Brian McLaren. The book and the Bible verses we read along with the chapter have led to interesting discussions.

There is also a weekly book discussion (by zoom) of the book "Us vs. Us" by Andrew Marin. It is the first book we have read on the subject of the LBGTQ community and some of their experiences with organized religion as they grew up. We hope to bring about open discussions to help Union Church make steps to becoming more intentional in being an open and affirming church.

Youth and Family Report: This team met recently to discuss an opportunity for the church to be engaged in the community this summer. The church has been asked to collaborate with the Hackensack Library to organize an activity for children in July. More information will be available as this project moves forward.

Women's Fellowship: Joni reported that the women's fellowship meeting last week went really well with 9 people attending. The group has their next 3 months of activities planned. Joni also mentioned that we need to put the coffee donation basket out each Sunday to encourage people to help cover the cost of our coffee.

Men's Fellowship: Stan reported that the March 1 meeting will feature Dick Kimmel, a retired biologist with the DNR, who was involved in the establishment of wild turkeys in Minnesota. Dick may also sing several "turkey-themed" songs.

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

Community Meal: Jo reported that 252 meals have been served in the past month. Last night 67 people came to pick up our Wednesday night meal. There will be no meal Easter week. The focus each week is to provide a home-cooked, healthy meal with a vegan option for those requesting that.

Jo mentioned that her team would like to buy a French fry maker which could be used for many different tasks. This would cost approximately \$50. **The motion to purchase a French fry maker was passed. Jo/Mary/passed**

Justice: Sue Kimmel reported that the JMT has completed the Intercultural Developmental Inventory (IDI). The primary orientation of the group toward people of other cultures was shown to be in the Minimization range. This means that as a group we recognize the humanity of every person and we try to act in tolerant ways. We are interested in differences but may have limited ability to adapt to other cultural perspectives because we feel that most people from other cultures are basically like us. We may minimize the importance of cultural differences. The JMT will discuss group results and will continue learning about people from other cultures.

Outreach: Karen reported that the March mission of the month is the Food Shelf Drive. The question was raised concerning whether we want to keep supporting two food shelves: the one in Hackensack and the one in Walker. Currently we have given 25% of our monies collected to Walker and 75% to Hackensack. After discussion there was a motion: **All money collected during the March food shelf drive will be donated to the Hackensack Food Shelf unless the giver of the donation indicates otherwise. Karen/Jo/passed**

Treasure Sale: Cindy reported that the old upstairs kitchen stove has been purchased. The money paid for the stove, \$1500, will be added to the Treasure Sale fund.

Old Business: As we continue to work on revising our Constitution and Bylaws, we addressed the question this month, “who should have a vote on Council?” Discussion focused on the fact that as a Congregational Church, decisions are made by the entire congregation. This is why we have meetings twice a year to decide on our budget and to elect officers to handle the day to day business of the church.

It was decided that employees of the church, ie, pastor, treasure sale coordinator, are not voters on Council. The current voters are:

Executive committee members: Moderator, Vice Moderator, Clerk, CFO (Chair of Financial Stewardship)

Board Chairs: Chair of Personnel, Chair of Facilities, Chair of Financial Stewardship (or a designee)

Ministry Teams: Adult Learning, Congregational Life, Justice Ministry Team, Outreach, Youth and Family, Worship, Technology, Member-at-Large, Men’s Fellowship and Women’s Fellowship

Term limits: On the agenda, but tabled until next meeting.

New Business: Mike Schmitt, Torri, Stan, and Don met this week to discuss the technological needs of the church. In the Library we need better video and audio. The office computer needs upgrading which can be done for very little money. The Sanctuary needs better lighting and audio, especially in the altar area. **The Technology Ministry Team is a new ministry team of the church.**

Meeting adjourned. Torri offered a benediction. Next meeting is March 17, 2022

Clerk, Karen Holle

THROUGH KODA'S EYES



Hi! My name is Koda, and I am the "Church Dog (in training)." I would like to tell you about my little foster brother named "Ruben (AKA Little Puppy)." My human brought him home January 14th to live with us until he could find his forever family.

Little Puppy was a 9-week-old Aussie-doodle who was just separated from his mom and siblings. He was 6 pounds! Bandit (the cat) outweighed him by 10 pounds, but that did not matter to Little Puppy. He was fearless! He was also not potty trained.

The first week Little Puppy was at our house, I did not know how to interact with him. I kept my distance. I never met another dog so young. I did not know how to play with him. I did not understand why he always wanted to cuddle or eat up all his food in 3 seconds. And I surely did not understand why he just needed to stop and pee randomly in the house. Bandit (the cat) and I both agreed that was disgusting!

Anyway, Little Puppy began to grow on me. We played and wrestled. I taught him how to sit, wait, and run the snow trails in our backyard. He taught me patience and how cuddling can be done with more than just my human. He was a good little foster brother.

A few weeks ago, my human and I went to meet Little Puppy's new forever family in the parking lot at Walmart. They seemed very sweet and very excited to have Little Puppy as their very own. I think Little Puppy was excited too because he peed on the human male. I thought it was a brilliant way to assert his dominance, but the male human just laughed and thought it was cute.

My human let me out of the car to say good-bye to Little Puppy. We sniffed each other one last time and then went our separate ways. I wish Little Puppy (whose new name is "Atlas") the best this life can offer. I am sure he will be well loved and happy in his new home.



I think sometimes dogs (and maybe humans too) are only meant to have certain ones in their lives for a short amount of time and then they separate and move on with their own lives. This is not a bad thing. I think sometimes God puts others in our lives to learn from and for them to learn something from us. Like "Sit" or "Stay" or "Do not pee on that!" But also to learn to be patient, or kind, or maybe just simply to learn how to play.

I wish Atlas a good life and thank him for the lessons he taught me even though he was my foster brother for only 4 weeks. That is how I see it through my eyes.

Have a barky day!

Koda "The Church Dog (in training)"



Exercise Class

Join friends of Union every Wednesday morning in the Friendship Hall for some group exercise from 10:00-11:00am.

10:00-10:30am — Light Impact

10:30-11:00am — High Impact



Dick's Acoustic Jam

Join Dick Kimmel the third Wednesday of every month for an all-acoustic music jam. Bring your instrument and music of choice to Union Church from 6:00-9:00pm and come get in on the fun!

MISSION OF THE MONTH

HACKENSACK AREA FOOD SHELF

by Karen Holle

The Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign brings together organizations, businesses, faith communities, and individuals to help keep the 300 food shelves statewide stocked throughout the year. For forty-one years Minnesota FoodShare has campaigned for donations on behalf of our food shelves. One in eleven Minnesotans experience food insecurities right now, and many of those are children or senior citizens. **TOGETHER, LETS FIGHT HUNGER IN MINNESOTA!!**

I spoke to Cheri Westphal of the Hackensack Area Food Shelf last week. She told me that the town has supported the food shelf really well and that she is very grateful for that. At least 25 families a week come through the Hackensack Area Food Shelf. Sometimes a family doesn't want to be seen at their local food shelf, so they come to another town for food. Each food shelf is required to serve anyone who comes to their doors regardless of the town of residence. People's life circumstances are different. Sometimes monthly income just doesn't cover the monthly bills. Sometimes people have to leave abusive homes and need help getting stabilized. Sometimes people become ill and can't work enough to cover their bills. Because Share and Care is open three days a week Cheri indicated that they are often asked for emergency food boxes. Cheri is happy to have the resources to help people out with emergencies.

If you would like to support the local food shelf in the month of March, please send a check to the church and indicate that the money is for the food shelf. This year all money collected will go to the Hackensack Area Food Shelf unless a note is written in the memo line of the check indicating you would like your check to go to the Walker Food Shelf.

Thank you for your generosity. Working together, not one person in our community will go hungry. **WE CAN AND DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!**

NOTES FROM THE BOARD OF FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Giving Income January	\$12,101.00	Year to Date Giving	\$12,101.00
Other Income	\$792.61	YTD Other Income	\$792.61
Total Income	\$12,893.61	YTD Total Income	\$12,893.61
Expenses January	\$9,089.62	Year to Date Expenses	\$9,089.62
Current Month Balance	\$3,803.99	YTD Balance	\$3,803.99
2021 Carryover	\$14,709.51	Carryover	\$14,709.51
<u>2022 Prepaid Pledges</u>	<u>\$1,150.00</u>	Prepaid	<u>\$1,150.00</u>
Monthly Net Income	\$19,663.50	YTD Net Income	\$19,663.50

(The 2021 Carryover and the 2022 prepaid pledges will only show in the monthly income column in January.)

Giving Income includes pledges, plate cash, and non-pledge giving and donations.

Other Income includes Treasure Sale, Community Meal, building use, fundraisers, and all other income sources, except interest and dividends generated from restricted funds and specified donations or grants not going into our operating funds

Checking available: \$23,691.36

Total Assets \$290,281.45

Our total assets have increased in the last few years because of generous legacy gifts from the estates of Norma Telander, Don Willis, and Barb Payne. Please consider including Union Church in your planned giving.

2022 Pledges

We have received 44 pledges for a total of \$100,675. We hope to receive a few more pledges coming in during early 2022. If you have yet made your pledge for 2022, please do so. If you need more information or a pledge card, please contact the church or Don Hoppe directly.

2022 Budget

At the February Council meeting we approved a budget for 2022 that was presented to the congregation at our Semi-Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 20. This budget, for the amount of \$173,050, was approved at that meeting.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

We will meet on the 10th of March. It is always the second Thursday of the month.

Our own (almost) world famous Master Gardener, Mary, will give us loads of spring gardening information and we will be planting and potting plants to take home and brag about over summer!

Remember we have Prayer Bears to give, with many prayers, to anyone with health problems and or just in need of extra prayers. They are in the Friendship Hall including cards.

If you need a healthy laugh, smile and great comradery please join us! We have great eats too. Hope to see you there! - Joni Kumpula

CELEBRATING THE PAST

Myra Damm, Historian Sanctuary Stained Glass Windows

I am repeating a history report that was done in 2019. The stained glass windows in the sanctuary are not only colorful but each window has a story to tell with the theme being water, earth, and sky. There were brochures printed that told the story of each window. The windows are such a part of the sanctuary, and the stories in each one are as follows.

The stained glass windows in the sanctuary were given by Wilbur Bogue in loving memory of Charlotte Bogue, and were dedicated on June 21, 1992. The windows were designed and crafted by Paul and Dianne Hipsher Stained Glass Studio of Longville, Minnesota.

Each window is based on a bible verse with a quote.

The themes of water, earth, and sky in these windows portray not only the physical world we live in, but they speak to us spiritually.

The water symbolizes the Holy Spirit and the new birth we receive in baptism.

The earth represents the physical life we inherit from the first human beings, Adam and Eve, whom God formed from the dust of the earth.

The heavens denote the spiritual life we have in Christ who came down from heaven to save us.

The windows with the cross, the other with the three figures, arms raised up, are meaningful to us at Easter. The first is the journey of Christ to the cross. The second window signifies the resurrected Christ. Death has been swallowed up by victory. The people of the land rejoice, for they have been delivered from their enemies.



ADULT LEARNING REPORT — by Pastor Torri

Over the past 2 years, the Adult Learning and Justice Team ministries have partnered with each other to do book discussions over Zoom. It has been an incredibly educational and transformational time for many of us. We have learned to look at life and people differently, but probably most importantly we have gotten to know one another on a deeper level. It has been wonderful getting to know different aspects of each other's lives and learn other people's ideas and views on various topics.

If this is something that interests you, please contact the office and let us know that you would like to get involved. We welcome anyone who would like to engage in our conversations.

Below is a list of books we have already discussed. We are taking recommendations and ideas for our next adventure together.

2020
Relational Philosophy
White Fragility
How to Be an Anti-Racist

2021
The Great Spiritual Migration
The 4 Agreements
History of Philosophy (Western)
Braiding Sweetgrass
Neither Wolf Nor Dog

2022
Us Vs. Us
Next Book - ???????
(Recommendations wanted)

ONGOING EVENTS



Women's Fellowship

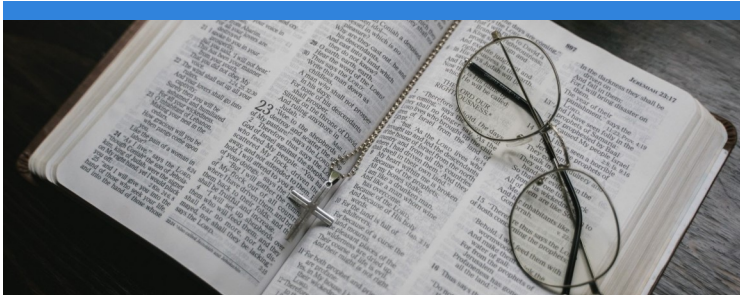
Thursday, March 10th at 1:00 pm in the Friendship Hall.

If you have any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at unionucc401@gmail.com.



Men's Fellowship

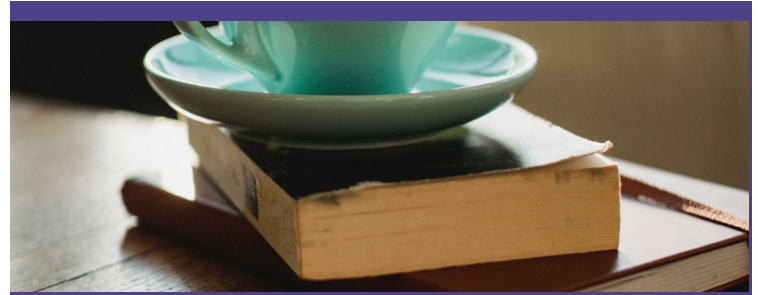
Tuesday, March 1st at 9:00 am in the Friendship Hall. The March 1 meeting will feature Dick Kimmel, a retired biologist with the DNR, who was involved in the establishment of wild turkeys in Minnesota. Dick may also sing several "turkey-themed" songs.



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.



Book Study

The next book study will begin after Easter. Watch for details!



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

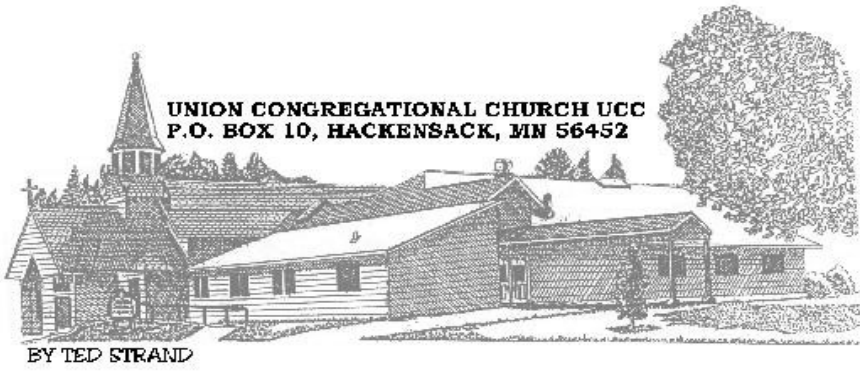
Every Wednesday at 4:00pm, drive-through only. Call Sue at (218) 820-3870 to reserve your meal.

Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

MARCH 2022

* = Community Event held at the church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 9:00am Men's Group	2 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 4:00pm Community Meal 5:30pm Ash Wednesday Service	3 6:30pm Justice Ministry Team Meeting (Zoom)	4 1:30- Bone Builders *	5
6 9:30am Worship & Communion 10:30am Coffee Hour	7 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	8 5:30pm Financial Board Meeting	9 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 12:00pm Bible Study 4:00pm Community Meal 5:30pm Lenten Service	10 1:00pm Women's Fellowship	11 1:30- Bone Builders *	12
13 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	14 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	15	16 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 4:00pm Community Meal 6:00pm Dick's Acoustic Jam*	17 1:00pm Church Council (Zoom)	18 1:30 Bone Builders *	19
20 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	21 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	22	23 10:00 am Exercise in Friendship 12:00pm Bible Study 4:00pm Community Meal 5:30pm Lenten Service	24 1:00pm Fiber Arts*	25 1:30 Bone Builders *	26
27 9:30am Worship 10:30am Coffee Hour	28 1:30 Bone Builders* 6:00pm AA Meeting*	29	30 10:00 am Exercise in Friendship 4:00pm Community Meal 5:30pm Lenten Service	31		



NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HACKENSACK, MN
PERMIT NO 5

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED



2022

**Ash Wednesday Service
March 2nd
5:30pm @ Union**

THE UNION NEWS