



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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Game night to resume after Easter!



APRIL 2022

Notes from Rev. Torri Vande Zande

The first day I met Lora, I knew my life would never be the same. She was bubbly, friendly and talked about Jesus a lot. I thought she was weird at first, but as I got to know her, I realized she was kind, loving and had a sincere desire to help people.

Even though she was 5 years older than me, I was intrigued by her life. I wanted to hang out with her but I was not brave enough to ask. Surprisingly, she asked me if I would want to hang out sometime. I quickly said, "Yes!" and I began to be her friend.

Lora was different. She talked about Jesus all the time. One night on the way home from a movie, we passed a park. She instantly pointed over to it and said, "That's where I pray!" I was so confused, but yet curious about her life.

Several months went by, and Lora became a huge influence on my faith in God. All the scriptures and doctrine I had learned as a child in church began sinking into my heart. It was during that time that I realized that life should not focus on learning ABOUT God, but, instead on living in a RELATIONSHIP with God.

I wonder if that is what the disciples went through when they met Jesus? Did they know their lives would never be the same? Did they think Jesus was weird when they first met Him and then later realize that he was kind and loving and

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Sunday Worship at 9:30 AM

Communion: First Sunday each month

JUSTICE MINISTRY TEAM

The Justice Ministry Team has been revising our mission statement and determining task priorities. We will discuss and confirm our mission statement and task priorities at our next Zoom meeting on April 7th at 6:30PM.

This is an exciting time to join the Justice Ministry Team as we become allies with our neighbors focused on social justice and environmental justice.

Contact: unionucc401@gmail.com for a Zoom link.

All are welcome!

COMMUNITY MEAL

by Jo Horak

Spring is arriving in bursts of cold, wet weather mixed with warm, sunny days. Just like the weather, changes do happen in the life of Union Church. In the middle of this Lenten Season we are grateful to be able to continue the Community Meal Program which offers hot, healthy meals on a weekly basis to individuals, couples, and families in our community and beyond. Meals are served on Wednesday nights between 4:00-5:30 PM by drive-up/in-house at the Union West Entrance. Numbers vary but we serve between 250-300 meals monthly. For many it is a chance for a hot meal prepared by willing hands and meeting special dietary needs. We have a wonderful Team who show up regularly to make this happen. Special thanks to Sue, Mike, Jo, Mary, Don, Rosie, Johanna, Roy, and Pastor Torri for dedicated service to this mission work. Many others have supported this work financially or with special service in making meals available/clean-up. Recently we have had two young people and several adults help with set-up/clean-up and they were an answer to a prayer! We welcome all who wish to assist in this project. Thanks to Jim, Gage, and Christa as well.

Recently we have had challenges due to frozen pipes in the church. We have had to cancel one scheduled meal a few weeks ago and weren't sure another meal would happen for the same reason - no water! By the grace of God and quick work by our Facilities Team and Sue, we were able to offer the meal. Some creative pick-up planning for meals is involved, and we are not sure how long it will last—depends on water pipes. For now, drivers should enter at the West Entrance, get meals, drive to lower parking lot, make a U-turn and exit the same way they came in. Signs will help direct drivers. This request is necessary to avoid running over water pipes on the surface of church parking lot. Working together we can make it happen and provide a needed service to our community! Prayers are greatly appreciated as well as donations of time and resources. We are an Easter People! Thanks be to God!

NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Spring is in the air! The trees which have been resting over the winter will soon begin to put out new leaves, and the seeds and plants which have lain dormant will begin to send up new growth to greet the returning warmth of the sun. The animals will awaken from their winter torpor and the birds will return to their nesting grounds to bring new life into the world.

As we approach Holy Week and the pain of Christ's suffering as well as the joy of His resurrection, let's take a moment to thank the Creator for the gifts He has so lovingly given us—his Son, our Savior, and this wonderful earth and all the creatures, great and small, who inhabit it with us. Like the trees and flowers, we too can take a deep breath and begin life anew in the joy of Christ's presence in our lives.

May your Easter celebration be a meaningful one.

-Heidi Hoppe



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

MARCH 17, 2022

PRESENT: Stan Kumpula, Ron Merritt, Don Hoppe, Cindy Gulbrandson, Marilyn Erickson, Karen Holle, Sue Kimmel, Heidi Hoppe, Joni Kumpula, Mary Parrish, Pastor Torri

Marilyn called the meeting to order and Pastor Torri offered a convening prayer.

The agenda was approved as written. The minutes were approved as written. Heidi/Joni

Pastor's Monthly Report to Council: Pastor Torri submitted her report to Council. Besides being very busy with the Lenten season and extra services with St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Torri has worked with a number of individuals who have needed pastoral care this month. There have been a number of deaths this spring among our congregants and there are other folks dealing with long term health issues. Two new members were welcomed into the church last Sunday. Welcome to Gunder Austin and Richard Vanden-Eykel and Knight!!

Board of Financial Stewardship: Don reviewed the financial data with us for January and February. Year to date total income is \$20,138 and year to date total spending is \$21,517 leaving us with a small negative balance. We have \$17,773 in our checking account and our total assets are \$285,305.

Board of Facilities: Ron informed us that our water froze up this week and we need to insulate the top of the pipes that come from the water tower to the church. We have a temporary system right now that will get us through the rest of the spring.

Ron has done some research on the cost of either removing the elevator or updating the elevator. The cost to remove the elevator is estimated to be \$18,000 and the cost to update it is \$58,000. We have some time before we need to make a decision about the elevator. We went on to discuss replacing the double door on the lower level of the church with a wider door that would allow wheelchair accessibility. Ron will get an estimate for that project. **A motion to replace the lower level door was passed. Ron/Joni**

Ron told us that he is resigning as the chair of Facilities because he will be moving with his family to St. Louis at the end of the summer. He will be putting his house on the market in June.

Personnel: Marilyn reported on a meeting yesterday that the executive committee had with Pastor Torri to review her performance and to discuss her sabbatical which is scheduled for 2024. We all considered the meeting to be a very good one.

Ministry Team Reports:

Congregational Life: Joni spoke about the recent meeting of the CL team. Calls are being made, many by Linda Ottman, our secretary who updates the prayer list and often talks to church members by phone. The team will be helping with memorial services this summer as we have lost quite a few church members this winter.

Worship: Heidi feels that worship is going well. This is a busy time with Lenten services as we move towards Easter. Although there will be no Good Friday service this year, Pastor Torri has a surprise in mind for Maundy Thursday.

Adult Learning: There is no book study right now and Bible Study is meeting each Wednesday at noon.

Youth and Family: The Youth and Family Team has been asked by the Hackensack Library to plan an event based off of a book called "The Hackensack Cafe Adventures" by Norrie Thomas. See details of this event in the newsletter.

Women's Fellowship: Joni reported that last month's meeting was great with Mary Parrish talking about gardening and everyone getting plants to take home. Next month at 1:00 on April 14, the group will tour the Rendezvous Brew-

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ery and will have the opportunity to sample 4 beers!

Men's Fellowship: Stan reported that the March 1 meeting was very good with Dick Kimmel talking about his work with the DNR to increase the number of wild turkeys in Minnesota. Next month, Gary Dietrich will be the speaker at the men's fellowship and will talk about efforts to increase housing units in our area.

Community Meal Program: Jo reported that the weekly meal program is serving 60 to 80 people each night. The program will be ending in mid-May at which time it will be re-evaluated. There will be no meal during Holy Week.

Justice Ministry Team: The Justice Ministry Team is working on revision of its mission statement and is determining its task priorities.

Current priorities are:

Improving the well-being of all members of our diverse community.

Acknowledging that we occupy land where other nations have lived and thrived. We are allies of our Anishinaabe neighbors.

Providing a welcoming and affirming place for our local LGBTQ community members.

Taking regenerative care of our environment, particularly protecting the quality of our waters.

Outreach: The Mission of the Month for March is the Food Shelf Drive. Next month we will focus on One Great Hour of Sharing.

Tech Team: Stan reported that Mike Schmitt has obtained a new camera that can be used for zoom meetings and shows all people sitting around a table. It has a very good microphone and is a great piece of technology.

Old business: Who gets a vote on Council? Last month we began this conversation. Today we reviewed our decisions. Men's fellowship has voted that they do not need a vote on Council. Today we discussed whether there is any reason that the Board of Financial Stewardship should have two votes on Council, one as part of the Executive Committee and one as a Council Board. We decided that one vote for Financial Stewardship was adequate.

New Business: Potential Goals for 2022 and beyond: Pastor Torri reviewed her list of projects that she feels are important for the growth and stability of the church. We discussed having a special church forum this summer for discussion about Torri's vision for the church.

Masking Protocol: It was decided that at this time masking for church functions will be optional whether people have been vaccinated or not. Heidi will change the signage on the church.

Game Night: After Easter Game Night will be restarted!!!

Adjournment and Benediction. Notes by Karen Holle, Clerk

An Evening in Tuscany

Faith in Action – Spaghetti Dinner

Tuesday, April 26, 2022 from 5:00 to 6:30 PM

Union Church in Hackensack

Call (218) 675-5435 to place your reservation



THROUGH KODA'S EYES



Hello! My name is Koda. My human is on vacation this week, so she asked me to write an article for something called a Newsletter to help her. I always want to help, so I am going to do my best.

My human is the pastor at Union Congregational Church and I am the “church dog (in training)”. I have been with my human now for a whole year! I have to admit, I was very confused when I got here. All the new smells and new people were a bit overwhelming at first, but I realized very quickly there were a lot of jobs I could do. I didn’t know quite how to do them, but I am learning.



My human has taught me that my number one job to do is to be a good boy and greet everyone who comes into the church. My human is teaching me that it was rude to jump, so I am doing my best not to jump on people. Sometimes I forget, but I am getting better.

My favorite time of the week is on Wednesdays at noon when the bible study humans come in. They all pet me and let me sit next to them and under the table. Sometimes my friend Lucy comes to play with me. We cause a ruckus, but our moms keep us in line.

On Sundays after everyone leaves after church, it is my job to clean up anything that fell on the floor. My human says I’m a vacuum that doesn’t need to be plugged in. I don’t know what that means, but as long as I find treats on the floor... I’m okay being called a vacuum.

I am learning that some parts of my job are very serious. There have been times when my human is alone at the church and I become very alert. I hear everything! I tell her if any car comes into the parking lot by barking. I have a loud bark, and... I am getting very good at it.

There have been a few times where I go over to the building next to the church. I think I have heard it called, “Birchview”. This confuses me because I have yet to find a birch tree in that building! And I am very good at finding trees! When we are there, she makes me lay down while she talks to the other humans. I usually get petted and sometimes I lay down at people’s feet and nap on the floor. I like that I can relax there and get pets from people.

When a human holds out their hand I will go over and sniff it. I am still a bit scared, but I am learning that they just want to be nice to me. If they give me a treat, I will do my best to take it gently. I love treats!

My human has a job where she works for God, and I think God put me here to help my human care for people and show them unconditional love. Like I said, my name is Koda and I am the “church dog (in training)”. Do I get a treat now?

Koda Vande Zande

“Union Congregational 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!

Treasure Sale 2022

Just a heads up that we will be organizing setup and workers for this year's Treasure Sale. Setup will begin in mid May, and the Sale runs June 8-11.

We will begin setting up our schedules early in May, so check next month's newsletter for more information, or contact Heidi Hoppe.



CELEBRATING THE PAST

Myra Damm, Historian
The Liturgical Paraments

The pulpit/lectern and altar are adorned with decorative clothes called paraments. In looking thru the history I found the following information. These paraments can be purchased from a supply house, but the paraments in our church are unique in that they are handmade just for UCC.

This project came under the sponsorship of Women's Fellowship and was approved by the Church Council. I also found some information in the Spiritual Life report from 1991. When this was being discussed Pat Coon volunteered to make the paraments in Hardanger, a Scandinavian form of needlework, done on an even weave cotton or lined material in geometric patterns. The liners were done by Betty Nye. A dedication of the new altar clothes was made as part of the regular Sunday Service. Later in the year a new Hardanger communion cloth was made by Pat Coon that matches the altar clothes.

The clothes have been used since they were put in place in 1991. The only information I found about Pat Coon was that she and her husband moved back to Iowa some years ago.

Her handiwork is a legacy we can enjoy each Sunday.



MISSION OF THE MONTH

One Great Hour of Sharing

The theme for 2022 for the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering is *Love Remains*, based on 1 Corinthians 13. In the scripture, the Apostle Paul helped newly converted Christians at Corinth embrace the virtue of love. Love is an active decision to think of others before self; to work on behalf of others; and to care for others with acts of kindness and advocacy. Paul taught that community is less about “me” and more about “us.”

“Us” —the community—is defined broadly without limitations and boundaries. Community crosses boundaries and borders, creating realities which transcend perceived differences in ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, religion, spirituality, and cultural diversity. It is not limited to one’s household or home church or immediate neighborhood.

Paul taught that Jesus formed a new kind of community from a group of diverse people - a community whose fabric of communal life was woven with threads of justice, love and service.

Over the last year, there were communities needing a little more compassion, love and support. Tornadoes, wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes ravaged communities worldwide, in some cases destroying everything, and leaving behind devastation and despair. Drought, violence and COVID wreaked havoc in communities, leaving people without food and resources for themselves and their families. When members of the United Church of Christ heard of these disasters they responded by offering food, water, medicines, education, and opportunities for sustainable development.

Thank you for your continued faithfulness in supporting those who need resources and assistance to recover their lives following disasters. We bear witness to God’s love and grace through our offerings to the One Great Hour of Sharing mission. Our gifts allow us to put love into action, ensuring that *Love Remains*.

If you would like to make a donation to One Great Hour of Sharing please write a check to the church and name the mission in the memo line. Thank you!

By Karen Holle from UCC Resource Materials

MEN’S FELLOWSHIP

Men's Fellowship meeting is on Tuesday, April 5th at 9:00am. We will have a presentation by Gary Dietrich, Advisory Board Member, Hackensack Lakes Area Community Foundation. He will present a discussion about housing needs in our area, particularly in light of Mann Lake Bee & Ag Supply's major growth path and now the largest employer in Cass County.

For the past two+ years a small group of people in the area, with the help of others have developed a plan to provide additional housing units and begin to address the need for child care. This effort will not only serve the needs of the Mann Lake company, it will also serve the needs of our broader community. We cannot get more services in this area without providing a larger base for the needs of all of us. Please come to hear a lot more about this subject.

We will also discuss our plans for food boxes for Easter.

Stan Kumpula



KOKORO CORNER

KOKORO CORNER APRIL 2022

Hello Friends!

We are happy to announce our upcoming summer and fall events. Truthfully we are more than happy, a little giddy even, thinking about a time when we can reconnect in person! Back is *Express Yourself*, a community-based open mic and coffeehouse, a new fun event called *Poetry Safari* and the return of the beloved *Songs of Peace on the Winter Solstice*. Mark your calendars - hope to see you there!



AUGUST 13th 9am-3pm

Poetry Safari is a fun new feature of the Northwoods Art and Book Festival. Start at Safari Headquarters at the Book Festival entrance. Pick up a checklist and hunt for hidden poems scattered throughout the festival grounds in Hackensack. Once you've found all the poems, head to Safari Headquarters for your prize!

Poetry Safari is a joint project of Kokoro and the Northwoods Arts Council



SEPTEMBER 8th ♪ OCTOBER 13th ♪ NOVEMBER 10th

Express Yourself Open Mic and Coffeehouse returns this September. Our modest stage and intimate candlelit setting welcome performers and community members alike for an evening of songs, theater, poetry, stories and humor. Performers who brave the spotlight receive a coupon to the Kokoro cafe, featuring coffee, tea and specialty concoctions whipped up by our featured barista!



DECEMBER 21st 7pm

The twelfth Songs of Peace on the Winter Solstice features plant music, singing bowls, peace chants, musical guests, poetry, a groovy intermission and a community peace song singalong with the Songs of Peace Band. Doors open at 6:30pm. Concert starts at 7pm. Come one - come all!

See our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/kokoroperformingarts>

Email us at kokoroperformingarts@gmail.com or call (218) 270-5648

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Put Thursday April 14th on your calendar! We are going to the brewery! At 1:00 we will meet at the Rendezvous Brewery in Hackensack. We will take a tour, have a tasting and an Easter party.

No you do not have to like beer. They have great root beer and kombucha. We will be meeting in the lovely back room, and they are opening just for us. It will be great fun please join us!

See you there!!!

-Joni Kumpula



ONGOING EVENTS



Women's Fellowship

Thursday, April 14th at 1:00 pm at Rendezvous Brewery.

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, April 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.



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

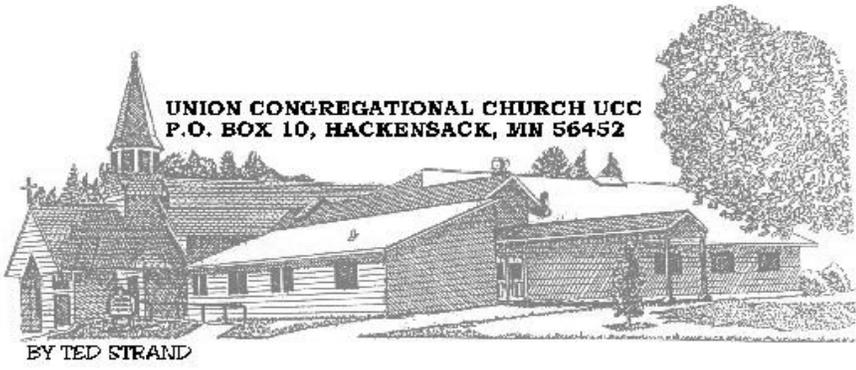
Every Wednesday at 4:00pm, drive-through only. Call Sue at (218) 820-3870 to reserve your meal.

Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

APRIL 2022

* = Community Event held at the church

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



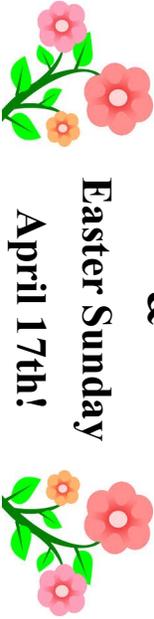
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FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED



2022

Maundy Thursday Service
April 14th!
&
Easter Sunday
April 17th!



THE UNION NEWS