

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
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JULY 2023

Moderator's Moment by Steve Erickson

Before Torri began her recent journey through Genesis, the Old Testament had always seemed remote. I don't own any camels or slaves, nor do I sacrifice lambs on custom-made altars. But, last Sunday, after listening to Kirin read the story of Rebekah, and then hearing Torri add her insight, it hit me: "Those ancient Israelites were struggling with the same human struggle I have been fighting all my life which is: "I know what I should be doing, but sometimes I find it easier to slip into criticizing and judging than being kind, because some people can just wear out my kindness reservoir. I want to be hospitable, but if I give everything away, what will I have left?"

Of course, I know that giving provides more benefits than worrying about what I have left; yet, I need to be reminded that God will help provide the balance.

As Torri pointed out, in one version of the story of Rebekah, we see the value of kindness and hospitality stressed as a priority.

This value can be shown in many ways with our family and friends, but it takes much more effort to figure out exactly how we can accomplish kindness and hospitality as a church community, particularly toward those who may seem different than us, or hold different values or beliefs.

Continues on Page 3

Sunday Worship at 9:30 AM

Communion: First Sunday of Every 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
Musicians	Sheryl Kaubisch Kathleen Millberg Barb Nish Dick Kimmel Sabbastian Wilson-Webb

CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderators	Marilyn McKnight & Steve Erickson
Clerk	Karen Holle
Board of Financial Stewardship	Don Hoppe
Ministry Teams:	
Congregational Life	Joni Kumpula
Facilities	Mike Bohanon & Kerry Swenson
Personnel	Marilyn McKnight
Worship	Heidi Hoppe
Men's Fellowship	Stan Kumpula
Women's Fellowship	Joni Kumpula
Adult Learning	Linnea Dietrich
Tech Team	Mike Schmitt
Treasure Sale	Cindy Gulbrandson
Justice Ministry Team	Sue Kimmel

TREASURE SALE

We had another very successful Treasure Sale, raising over \$6,000 during the 4-day sale and \$7,900 since the last sale ended. Many heartfelt thanks to all those who donated items and/or their time during the setup and sale. Without you, it would not have been such a success! Cindy will continue to post items online, so if you have something you would like to donate, please contact her.

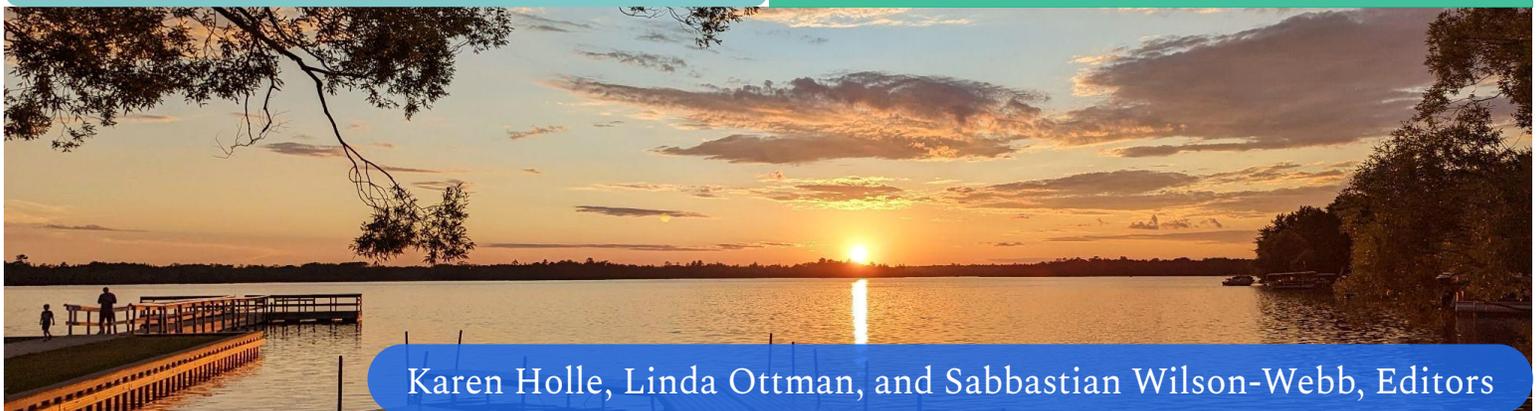
Hoppe 50th Celebration

Please join the Hoppe family on Saturday, July 8 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Friendship Hall as Don and Heidi celebrate 50 years of marriage. There will be refreshments, and cards would be welcome.

JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 1	Erin Fischbach
July 4	Gus Kaubisch
July 5	Marian Wald
July 8	Fred Smith
	Bonnie Hiniker
July 11	Bruce Carlson
	Rev. Torri Vande Zande
July 13	Barb Waldron
July 15	James Hoppe
July 16	Katie Knutson
July 19	Gracee Rudkin
July 21	Linda Ottman
July 23	Gary Dietrich
July 25	George Strawn
July 26	Chris Hoppe
July 30	Gary Kwong

Happy Birthday



Continued from Page 1

Our justice ministry team is continuing to look for ways we as a church community can be kind and hospitable. Union Church helped organize the Hackensack neighborhood cleanup last month which was an astounding success. When we exhausted volunteers sat down together on Saturday afternoon, having raked more leaves and loaded more discarded stuff to the dump than people our ages should perhaps carry, I think many of us realized that giving two full days of extraordinary kindness, without expecting anything in return, delivered more satisfaction dividends (to the volunteers) than could ever be expected.

In addition, we learned many of the stories of each person who needed our help and after gaining more understanding about their situation, for me, I learned once again that helping is far more important than judging.

UNION MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Union Church presented two \$500 scholarships this year to graduating seniors. Both recipients are graduates of W-H-A.

The scholarships were presented to Sophia Landreville and Desirae Phillips at a recognition ceremony on May 17th at the W-H-A high school by Don Hoppe.

Sophia is planning to study nursing and Desirae will be preparing to be a teacher. Both young women had very good applications, letters of reference, and were selected from the four applications received.

The Memorial Scholarship was the Mission of the Month in May, and we are happy to say that almost \$1,000 was received from members and friends to provide scholarships in the future. Previously Union Church received a \$1,000 donation to the Memorial Scholarship Fund from the Tauber family, in memory of Sandy Tauber.



NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Well, summer is in full swing in our beautiful corner of the world, and I hope you are enjoying the season, wherever you happen to be.

Our church is a vibrant place this time of year. There seems to be something going on all the time. The Treasure Sale was a great success again this year. With the lower level being turned into a Child Care Pod, I wonder whether we will have one in the future. We'll have to talk about that.

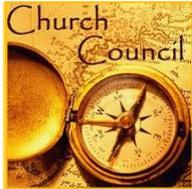
Birchview Church is continuing to meet, as is the bi-weekly Friendship Time at Ellie Nelson's. I know everyone is welcome to attend either of these groups, so contact Pastor Torri if you are interested.

I hope to see you in church, but if you cannot make it, be sure to watch the service online through YouTube, the church's website, or our Facebook page. Torri is an excellent preacher! She brings the scriptures to life every week, and her explanations of Genesis (our current series) are truly enlightening.

Take care, and may the Peace of Christ be with you always.

Heidi Hoppe, Chair





COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 22, 2023

PRESENT: Heidi Hoppe, Don Hoppe, Cindy Gulbrandson, Sue Kimmel, Pastor Torri Vande Zande, Marilyn McKnight, Karen Holle, Mike Bohanon, Joni Kumpula, Stan Kumpula, Kerry Swenson

Marilyn called the meeting to order. The agenda was approved as written. The minutes of the last meeting were approved. Don/Stan

Pastor's Monthly Report: Pastor Torri highlighted the projects she has been involved with this month. She recently attended the MN Conference Annual Meeting. She felt that the anti-racism training which was offered before the meeting was very good. She is making connections with other UCC pastors and hopes to visit some of their churches.

Board of Facilities: Kerry reported on the work being done for the child care pod project. The pod area will be receiving a new furnace, a heat pump, and an air exchanger. The grant from Cass County will cover these expenses. Kerry has also received bids to replace furnaces and add heat pumps for the friendship hall area. This project might be paid for by the child care pod grant as an incentive to the church for hosting the project.

The church recently received an energy audit from Minnesota Power. The audit recommended replacing any incandescent bulbs that we still have and also change CFLs to LED. This alone could really lower our electric bill. We can also lower our water bill by changing out faucets in bathrooms and in the kitchen. The audit also recommended changing our current ceiling fans in the sanctuary to Energy Star ceiling fans that only run when people are using that space.

Solar project: Kerry also reviewed the project to install solar panels in the church parking lot that would generate enough power to meet the church's needs and would leave another 10,000 kilowatt hours of power that we could sell. We have one bid for the project and will be obtaining other bids for comparison.

We discussed having our cleaning company clean the downstairs of the church on a one time basis. Motion for an extra cleaning of the downstairs of the church not to exceed \$200. Cindy/Sue/passed. We decided to wait to schedule this until after all the rummage sale leftovers have been removed.

Board of Personnel: In recognition of the work Tammy Lindberg has done to get our kitchen and pantry organized and to thank her and John for preparing community meals and food for the Treasure Sale weekend, Council would like to present a thank you gift of appreciation. Mike/Sue/passed.

Pastor Torri asked if the Board of Personnel could establish a group to work with her on her sabbatical preparations. Marilyn agreed to this request.

There was also a request to get a pastor-parish group started as soon as possible.

Board of Financial Stewardship: Don reviewed his monthly report with Council. Total income for the month was \$9,594, and expenses were \$12,485, leaving us with a negative balance for the month. Our year-to-date balance is \$21,001 thanks to a gift the church received early in the year. Don's team is preparing for the 2024 Stewardship Drive. Because costs are increasing and the Fetzer grant is ending, we will need substantial additional pledges and donations from our members and friends to have a balanced 2024 budget.

Ministry team reports:

Congregational Life: Work continues on the new directory, and wonderful activities such as game night, community meals, movie night, and others. Outreach to our shut-ins also continues.

Worship: Over the past 5 weeks the average attendance at worship is 52. The online average is 7 families, and the attendance at the "Birchview Church" is regularly 9 people. Two people from the Conference will be preaching in July/August this summer.

Women's Fellowship: In June we had a style show, and women from all the churches in Hackensack were invited to attend. It was a great event attended by 70 people! In July the scheduled event will focus on a tour of the Bonna Paulson Wildlife Preserve and a talk by Stacy Hirshi about her experience walking the Camino last summer.

Men's Fellowship: Stan reported that the men had a great time at the Forest History Center in Grand Rapids and ate a great Chinese restaurant for lunch. In July the men will join the women to hear about Stacy's walking experience.

Justice Ministry Team: Sue reported that the Neighbor Helping Neighbor Community Clean-up was so successful that it will be offered each spring. A small number of people accomplished many projects in two days.

The Justice Ministry Team will partner with Mike Tauber and the Water Keepers to offer a sense of hope and action on water quality concerns, especially in the area of agricultural run-off. A meeting will be held at Mike and Jen Tauber's house on July 6. People from other groups will be invited to attend this meeting by zoom.

Onigum's Traditional Pow Wow is July 22 and 23. The Justice Ministry Team has been asked to assist with the Leech Lake Indian Council booth selling drinks, ice, and raffle tickets.

Outreach: Don reported that a total of \$1,875 was donated for the Memorial Scholarship Fund in the past two months. This will allow the church to offer two scholarships next year of \$1,000 each, we hope.

Treasure Sale: Cindy reported that \$6,402 was earned at this year's Treasure Sale. With online sales added in, the total for the year is almost \$8,000! Thank you, Cindy! All leftover Treasure Sale items will be taken to the Akeley Regional Community Center.

Moderator's Moment: Marilyn reported that she and Steve have had a great deal of company this summer and feel behind on their church projects. Sometimes it's hard to live on a lake!

Old Business: Joni reported that a celebration of the Wook-Ness conservation easement will be scheduled in July or August when a representative from the Minnesota Land Grant department can attend.

New Business: Semi-Annual Meeting: Our semi-annual meeting will be held on July 30 after our worship service. Reports need to be in to Linda by July 11 so that she can create the 2022- 2023 Annual Report.

Adjournment and Benediction. Meeting adjourned. Pastor Torri offered a benediction. Next meeting is July 20.

Clerk, Karen Holle

JUSTICE MINISTRY TEAM

The Justice Ministry Team will have a water protection discussion and water tour at Mike and Jen Tauber's home (2540 Co 41 NW, Backus) on Thursday, July 6 at 6:30 p.m. The discussion will center around agricultural runoff and how it affects local water. We will take a 1/4 mile hike to a "super pond" which demonstrates changes in the water table. A "light meal" of salad, wild rice fritters and dessert will be served. All are welcome.

If you would like to carpool to this event, notify Sue Kimmel,
jmt.ucchackmn@gmail.com

The Rural Organizing Project – Isaiah One on One Training will be at the HUB in Hackensack on July 10th, 7:00-9:00pm

The 24th Annual Onigum Pow Wow is July 22 and July 23 at the Community Center, 8826 Onigum Rd NW, Walker.

Grand entry is around 1:00pm

THROUGH KODA'S EYES

Koda: Bandit! Bandit! Guess what?!

Bandit (the cat): *sigh... What?

Koda: You will not believe what the humans are learning at the church!

Bandit (the cat): I don't care.

Koda: Bandit! They are learning about extravagant hospitality! Do you know what extravagant hospitality is?

Bandit (the cat): No, and I am fine not knowing.

Koda: I am glad you asked! Extravagant hospitality is when you go out of your way to make someone feel comfortable. I am very good at extravagant hospitality!



Bandit (the cat): No you're not.

Koda: I am too, Bandit! Stop teasing me!

Bandit (the cat): Okay, fine. Tell all-knowing Koda... what does extravagant hospitality look like?

Koda: Well, it looks different for each person. For some it might be going out of the way to help someone. For others it might be providing a meal or a place to stay. And for others it might be making sure someone feels safe and protected.

Bandit (the cat): All of that sounds extremely unselfish.

Koda: Yes! Exactly!

Bandit (the cat): And it sounds exhausting! Not interested.

Koda: Oh. Okay, Bandit. I just thought you might be excited about what the humans are learning.

Bandit (the cat): Wait! The humans are learning how to have extravagant hospitality?

Koda: Yes!

Bandit (the cat): Well, then I think it's time to meet more of these humans. They can extend their extravagant hospitality to ME!

Koda: Ummm.... Okay. But that means you need to be crated, get in the car and go for a ride to church!

Bandit (the cat): Oh... then forget it.



BOARD OF FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Operating Income and Expenses

Giving Income- May	\$ 8,852.00	Year to Date Giving	\$ 51,670.00
Other Income *	\$ 742.00	YTD Other Income *	\$ 35,847.50
Total Income	\$ 9,594.00	YTD Total Income	\$ 87,517.50
Expenses- May	\$ 12,484.84	Year to Date Expenses	\$ 68,526.12
Current Month Balance	\$- 2,890.81	YTD Balance	\$ 21,001.22

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

Checking available: \$ 57,844.50
 Total Assets \$ 300,237.10

Summary

May giving was significantly less than May, 2022 and was a little low for May in general. Expenses were lower this month and about normal for May. June numbers look very good. At this point our position of revenue vs. expenses continues to be fine, especially if looked at on an annual basis and compared to our approved budget.

The Board of Financial Stewardship has begun preparing the for the 2024 Stewardship campaign. Information will be mailed at the end of July. This campaign will be more challenging for various reasons.

2023 is the last year that the Fetzer money will be received. In 2023, the Operating budget received \$7000, and \$7000 went into the MRI (Facilities reserve fund).

Our 2023 budget was balanced because of a very substantial donation received at the end of last year.

Pastor Torri will be taking a 3-month sabbatical after 5 years of service to Union Church. Funds will be necessary to employ a replacement for that period.

Costs are increasing, and we will need substantial additional pledges and donations from our members and friends to have a balanced 2024 budget.



Birthday Invitation from Pastor Torri



Hi everyone,

My birthday is July 11th, and I want to celebrate it in a different way this year. I want to invite everyone to the Friendship Hall at church Saturday, July 15th from 4:30 - 6:30 for pizza and cake... my treat! No gifts, no decorations... just people coming to celebrate with me.

After the party, I want to give an open invitation to anyone who would like to go with me to The Walker Bay Theater to watch a play called, "The Church Basement Ladies." Tickets are \$25 and \$20 for seniors. If you would like to go, let me know by July 12th. I have reserved 15 tickets.

Pastor Torri

SUMMER COMMUNITY MEALS & ACTIVITIES

Summer Community Meals are every Wednesday from 4:00 to 5:30 pm in the Friendship Hall. Community Meals will take a break in August and resume in September.

Every 2nd Wednesday there is a Game Night at 5:30 pm, and every 4th Wednesday there is a Movie Night at 5:30 pm following the meal!

July 26th - Movie Night - "The Way" with Martin Sheen. A father heads overseas to recover the body of his estranged son who died while traveling the "Camino de Santiago" from France to Spain.

July 12th - Trivia Night – Come with a team of 8 (or join one!) for a night of fun-filled trivia! Cost \$10 per person.

Meal Menu for July

5th - Cookout with hamburgers, hotdogs, chips, chicken salad, dessert

12th - Enchilada casserole with beans and rice, salad, and dessert

19th - Meatloaf, mac and cheese, salad, and dessert

26th - Soup and Sandwich, salad, chips, dessert

BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITY

Evolutionary science and religion should be friends, and this in spite of the fact that half of all Americans question evolution. The book Evolution for Everyone by David Sloan Wilson is very readable and strongly promotes this friendship. Union Church will sponsor a group this summer that will read and discuss this book. The group will be led by "Snowbird" George Strawn, and it is open to everyone. However, George does issue a warning. Both science fundamentalists who think science has all the answers and religious fundamentalists who think that God wrote the Bible will be disappointed in the book.

If you are interested, please contact George Strawn. Logistics for the group will depend on those who will be participating. George can be reached at (571)-594-8008 or gostrawn@gmail.com. Please contact him by July 7th if you are interested.

TECH TEAM COMMUNICATIONS

Reminder - We can use your old technology!!

It's a great time to get rid of your old technology and put it to good use. We want your old laptops, desktop computers, iPads, tablets, monitors, keyboards, mice, printers, stereos, and flat screen TVs. We will clean them and erase all data while we bring them back to life and find them a new home and new purpose.

Please drop off your working, no longer used technology, before June 30th.

Union Congregational Church: 401 Lake Ave E, Hackensack

Office hours: 9 am to Noon, Mon - Thur, or 9 am to 11 am on Sunday

If your electronic items are broken, it's easy to drop them off at the Walker\Hackensack Transfer Site just north of Hackensack, or the Pine River Station north of Pine River on Highway 371. There is no charge to Cass County residents to drop off electronic equipment.

For questions please contact:

Email: TechTeam.UCCHackMN@gmail.com

Call the UCC office during office hours at 218-675-6300

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Greetings, our June dessert and style show was a great success and lots of fun! The models were terrific, the rhubarb cake was delicious, and the room was full of friends from all the churches. Hackensack shopkeepers donated 21 door prizes. A good time was had by all.

On Thursday, July 13th we will be meeting at the church door for a walk across the parking lot to briefly tour the park. Then we will go into the Friendship Hall for dessert and a talk by Stacy about her and Linnea's walk in Spain on the Camino Trail. It will be exciting, and we are inviting the men to come too.

If you have any great ideas for future meetings, please let me know. We have been having lots of fun and exciting meetings. Remember it's always the second Thursday of the month at 1:00.



Style Show Participants

CELEBRATING THE PAST: History of Your Choir

Myra Damm, Historian

In the records the first mention of the choir was in 1924 to 1928.

Marjory Wentzel Woock was pianist for the church and Sunday School. During this time her mother, Mrs. Conrad Wentzel played at her home while directing and rehearsing the junior choir, which won first place at a convention in Brainerd.

In 1945, a youth choir was formed and choir robes were purchased. In 1956, blue choir robes were purchased for the use of our 18 to 25 members singing in the choir.

Members of the choir, along with their husbands and other members were helpful trying to keep the church presentable by moving lumber piles, dusting the pews, and sweeping during the 1959 remodel. It was during this time that the choir loft was constructed. In the summer of 1964, several organ recitals were given by Wes Kohl and his wife Amy of Ten Mile Lake. Freewill offerings were taken following the recitals.

Some of our choir directors over the years have been:

Alice May Bradley from 1959 to 1960. Alice May shared that the choir was small with about 8 people, and they sang from the choir loft.

Other directors were Fran Meill before 1981, Josephine Majors (who was also instrumental in bringing the bell choir to reality) led the choir. A summer resident Alice Kay from Ten Mile Lake was an able director for a period of time. From 1991 to 1992 Pete DeBoer, director of the Lutheran church choir, also directed the UCC choir.

In 1992, Ann DeGray became director until she moved out of the area in 2006. Beth Trout took over as director. Sheryl Kaubish also directed the choir and has filled in in the winter and other times when Beth was away.

At present, our choir is not active, but special music will be offered at different times.

A JOURNEY WITHIN - Adult Learning

By Linnea Dietrich

Walk,
you are born for the Camino.
Walk,
you have an appointment.
Where? With whom?
Nobody knows, maybe with yourself?
Walk,
your steps will be your words,
the path your song,
the tiredness your prayer,
finally your silence will speak.
Walk,
alone, with others, but go out of yourself,
you have created enemies in your life
but now you meet new friends.

From The European Pilgrim

Walk,
your mind doesn't know
where your steps are leading your heart.
Walk,
you are born to make the journey,
the one of the pilgrim.
Another one walks toward you and looks for
you so that you can meet Him
in the sanctuary of your heart,
this is the goal of your journey,
in the deepest part of your heart,
God is your peace,
God is your joy.
God is walking with you.

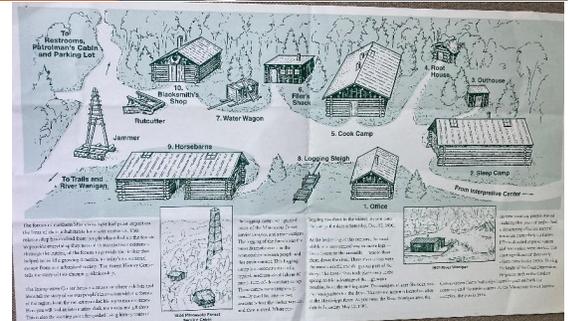
Pilgrimage is an ancient spiritual practice. "A pilgrimage is a journey, often into an unknown or foreign place, where a person goes in search of new or expanded meaning about their self, others, nature, or a higher good through the experience. It can lead to a personal transformation, after which the pilgrim returns to their daily life." Definition from Wikipedia.

Please join the Men's and Women's Fellowship groups at UCC as they welcome Stacy Hirschi and myself to share about our most recent pilgrimage, the Camino de Santiago, the Way of St. James, across Spain from east to west, a 500-mile journey of the heart by foot. We will be meeting at Bonna Paulson Observatory at 1 PM Thursday, July 13th. The park is past the church and houses the community garden and dog park.

Lectio Divina won't meet on July 5th, but will continue on July 12th, Wednesdays at 3:30 PM.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

The trip to the Forest History Center on June 14th in Grand Rapids was really fun to explore the history of logging in the early 1900's. They have an excellent visitor center, and the actual logging camp of the early 1900's revealed the poor conditions the loggers had then. The only good thing was good food to keep them going. Of course, we had lunch at the Chinese Grand Buffet which has a large choice of good food.



We plan a working session on our regular time of the second Tuesday of the month (July 11th). I will provide more details in the email I send to you later.

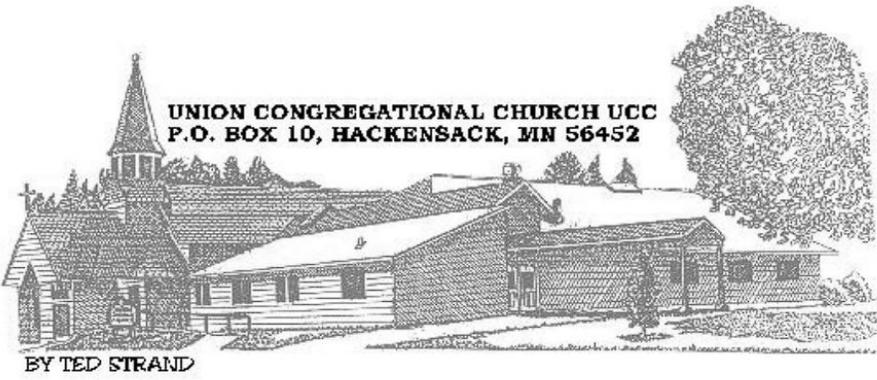
On July 13th, at 1pm, We are invited to join Women's Fellowship at the church door for a walk across the parking lot to briefly tour the park. Then we will go into the Friendship Hall for dessert and a talk by Stacy about her and Linnea's walk in Spain on the Camino Trail.

Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

July 2023

* Community event

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	1 SATURDAY
2 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	3 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	4 Independence Day Office Closed	5 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 10:00am Fellowship Time at Ellie's 4:00pm Community Meal	6 6:30pm Justice Ministry Team Gathering at Taubers'	7 Office Closed 4:30pm Izaak Walton Spaghetti Dinner	8 1:00 to 5:00 pm Hoppe 50th Anniversary Celebration
9 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	10 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	11	12 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 3:30pm Lectio Divina 4:00pm Community Meal 5:30pm Trivia Night	13 1:00pm Women's and Men's Fellowship gathering at Bonna Paulson Park	14 Office Closed 1:30pm Bone Builders*	15 4:30 to 6:30 Torri's Birthday Pizza Party at church, followed by optional attendance at "Church Basement Ladies" at Walker Bay Theater
16 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	17 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	18 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	19 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 10:00 am Fellowship Time at Ellie's 3:30pm Lectio Divina 4:00pm Community Meal 6:00pm Dick's Acoustic Jam*	20 1:00pm Council Meeting	21 Office Closed 1:30pm Bone Builders*	22
23 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00pm Birchview Church	24 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	25 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	26 9:30am Nature's Invitation 10:00am Exercise in Friendship Hall* 3:30pm Lectio Divina 4:00pm Community Meal 5:30pm Movie Night "The Way"	27 9:00am Congregational Life Meeting 1:00pm Fiber Arts*	28 Office Closed 1:30pm Bone Builders*	29
30 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00pm Birchview Church	31 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*					



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THE UNION NEWS



Trivia Night July 12th!

2023

