



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

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

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



FEBRUARY 2020

Notes from Rev. Torri Vande Zande

"Now What?"

Advent is done. Christmas is over. The New Year has begun. "Okay", I asked myself. "Now what?"

I found myself asking that question as I sat in my house watching 10 inches of snow come down from the sky. "Now what?"

Do I pretend not to have cabin fever when I'm snowed in for two days?

Do I grit my teeth and forge my way through the winter as if the face-freezing cold doesn't bother me? Do I hunker down in my house and wait until spring thaw... or mud season as we call it up here?

What do I do now?

Winter is hard. Winter is lonely. And I don't think I am the only one that experiences this.

I've had this issue for as long as I can remember. The holidays are over and the decorations are taken down and I am left with feelings of sadness and at times loneliness. But I have learned these feelings don't have to be a bad experience. I think both sadness and loneliness are important and valid in my life.

In those times, I need to recognize sadness and loneliness, greet them by name, and embrace their value. I have learned to welcome them into my life. They have become friends who visit, maybe share an evening, but are not welcome to stay or move in. Sadness and loneliness are wonderful guests, but horrible roommates.

When they visit, I will often take out pictures of family and reminisce about times of my childhood. I think about loved ones I have lost along the way and friends who have grown distant. I momentarily grieve as I rummage through my dad's old trunk, read old journals, or see heirlooms from my family history. Sadness and loneliness are my companions at that moment. They remind me that it is okay to miss those I have lost along the way. They remind me to cherish relationships I have now, and to seek out friendships that will challenge me to grow into who God wants me to become.

So, when the evening is over, I ask sadness and loneliness to leave. I close the photo book and I put away the memories. Then I ask myself again, "Now what?", and with anticipation I look forward to what a new day will bring.

It is winter. It is a time of reflection. That is what it has become for me anyway. At times it does get sad and lonely, but those feelings are not bad. Sadness and loneliness have a purpose. So, if you can relate to these words, just remember... sadness and loneliness make wonderful guests, but horrible roommates. Ask them to leave at the end of the night.

In Christ Alone,

Pastor Torri Vande Zande

Sunday Worship at 9:30 A.M.

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

Church Staff

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

Church Council

Moderator.....Joni Kumpula
 Vice-Moderator.....Tom Cox
 Clerk.....Karen Holle
 Board of Financial Stewardship.....Don Hoppe

 Ministry Teams:
 Christian Learning.....Jo Horak
 Congregational Life.....Margaret Zieffler
 Facilities.....Mike Bohanon and Ron Merritt
 Personnel.....Church Council
 Worship.....Heidi Hoppe
 Men's Fellowship.....Ron Merritt
 Women's Fellowship.....Linda Merritt

MODERATOR'S NOTES

Greetings from our beautiful snow land!

Wow, have we had snow — 50 inches so far. However that does not stop Union from any activities. Yes, I know we had to cancel worship twice. But still nothing stops. The boards and ministry teams are all moving along. They are already planning for summer activities. Our numbers are smaller and we are worshipping in the Friendship Hall. We do find that rather fun.

Stan and I visited the Milbergs in sunny Florida and they send greetings. When we came back I immediately tore my meniscus in the right knee. I don't make a good relaxed sitter. I have the little surgery on Monday morning and I can hardly wait! Then we leave for the twin cities and Arizona for a couple weeks. I hope someone will remember to water the plants...

It is great to now have an AA group meeting at Union on Monday nights. It's good to be using the building in good community ways. We will soon have some Faith in Action meetings also. Our Wednesday night community meals are growing and doing great. Pastor Torri is doing a class with some of them after dinner. Koko-ro is also doing well. The next Open Mic is Sunday afternoon February 9th. Do attend for some fun and entertainment!

Well guess I need to run along. See you in church!

Joni



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- February 1 Fritz Zieffler
 Terrence Larkin
- February 10 Dave Bauer
- February 12 Helen Howe
- February 14 Tim Clover
- February 15 Sarah Cox
 Bob Crom
 Bruce Kaiser
 Beverly Peterson
- February 17 Vi Whalen
- February 18 Mary Martin
- February 24 Jane Odell
- February 25 Elsa McNelis
- February 26 Jim Allan
- February 28 Stan Kumpula





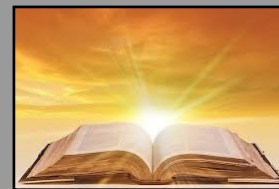
SCRIPTURES TO MEDITATE ON IN FEBRUARY

Matthew 5:1-12

Matthew 5:13-16

Matthew 5:43-48

Matthew 6:25-34



CAESAR'S TALES

Hi, my name is Caesar and I am the church dog.

It has been very cold out lately! I like going outside and playing in the snow. I like to roll around in it and itch my back too. That is the best!

There have been several cold days lately where I am not safe to be outside very long. I get bored inside, so I find things to do like; sleeping, eating, looking out the window, eating, kicking Bandit (the cat) off my bed, and barking at snowmobilers as they race past the house.... Oh, and eating. I really like eating!

My latest boredom breaker is great because it helps my human a lot! You see, my human makes fires in a hole in the wall that she has in the living room. I think she calls it a fireplace. Anyway, she has a big stack of chopped up trees in a box next to this fireplace. She takes these tree parts and puts them into the fire to heat up the house.

Some of these chopped up trees are pretty big, so I help by taking some of them out of the box and chewing them up in smaller pieces so my human can burn them more easily. It is great fun, and it helps my human. I don't know how, but I feel very useful when I'm doing it.

I think it is important to be active in the winter. And I think it is important to be helpful to humans. So, if you have a chance to help another human with something this winter, please try to do it (but please do not do any wood chewing... that's my job!). Remember.... We all need each other! We are all one pack!

Have a Barky Day!

Caesar

(The Church Dog)

P.S. (which in dog language means "puppy scratches")

I was at the Christmas Eve service and my human told my adoption story. If you would like to hear it, you can find it on the church website under media. It is an audio recording. The website is www.unioncchackensack.com. There are other recordings and videos too, but the Christmas Eve one is the best because it is about me!





COUNCIL MINUTES – January, 16, 2020

PRESENT: Caryl Allan, Tom Cox, Joni Kumpula, Karen Holle, Ron Merritt, Jo Horak, Heidi Hoppe, Pastor Torri Vande Zande, Karen Holle, Don Hoppe, Stan Kumpula

Joni called the meeting to order. The agenda was accepted as written. Heidi/Jo. The minutes of our November meeting were accepted as written. Ron/Don.

Pastor Torri offered a convening prayer and went on to present her monthly pastor's report. Torri emphasized that although we are losing some long time members this winter due to them needing different living situations, there are new people in church which is very exciting. There are also new activities taking place in the church. Five people from the Wednesday evening program have been coming in once a month to help make blankets for our blanket ministry. Some of those people have asked to use space in the church for drumming once or twice a month. A new AA meeting is occurring weekly in the library at 6:00pm on Monday evenings.

There will be a new member class on February 9 which is open to anyone interested in learning more about the church or in joining the church.

Financial Stewardship: Don distributed our revenue and expense projections for 2020. His team has spent a great deal of time looking at revenue and expenses for 2020 in order to come up with a balanced budget to present the Council for approval before presentation to the Congregation on January 26 at the semi-annual meeting.

Important takeaways from the Board of Financial Stewardship:

As we lose older members of the church we often lose significant income. Each year our pledges are a little lower than the year before.

We receive money each year from the Fetzer Institute which has traditionally been used partly for operating expenses and partly for MRI (building maintenance). This year all money from Fetzer will be put into the operating budget except that which is designated for the Food Shelf.

This is a really important year for us as a church. New people are coming, but we are losing older people who are significant pledgers to the church. We need to be discussing sustainability for the church this year.

The Council voted to raise Torri's salary by \$1,000 this year. If we can we will give Torri a bonus at the end of the year. Torri's hard work was acknowledged by Council. Heidi/Ron/passed.

The Council also voted to raise Sabbastian's salary from \$15 per hour to \$15.50 in March when he has been with us for 6 months. Council feels that Sabbastian's skills are a real asset to the church. Tom/Ron/passed.

Council members were advised that any spending in their areas that exceed their budget worksheets must be discussed with the Board of Financial Stewardship before the expense is incurred. The final decision for unexpected expenses will be made by Council.

The Council passed the modified 2020 budget presented by the Board of Financial Stewardship. This budget will now go to the Congregation. Don/Heidi/passed.

Facilities: Ron reported that the church had developed large ice dams on the gutters which needed to be addressed. Northern Septic steamed the ice dams off which took several days and cost \$4,000. This expense is not covered by insurance.

Ron has asked Rreal Solar for a quote for installing solar panels at the church. Once the quote comes in Ron will look for ways to finance the project.

Personnel: Karen will update Pastor Torri's letter of call for 2020 and will get it signed.

Congregational Life: This group recently met to talk about vulnerable members and to continue the project of collecting crisis information for each member of our congregation.

Worship: There was discussion regarding the need to hire replacement pastors when Pastor Torri is not able to be with us. Maybe hymn sings could happen then or perhaps a member of the congregation would prepare an address. Pastor Torri is also willing to prepare a sermon that we would watch on the video screen during a service that she cannot attend. Pastor Torri also mentioned that people are needed to help with projection during services.

Women's Fellowship: The women's fellowship has \$4,027 in their checking account and will donate \$1,000 to the church for the operating budget for 2020. Trivet hot pads will be made for the Easter baskets this year.

Men's Fellowship: Ron reported that the men put turkeys in the Christmas boxes and that the feedback was that people really enjoyed that. Because turkeys are more expensive than hams, the Lions gave the Men's Fellowship a donation to cover the extra cost.

Christian Learning: Jo reported that the Community meals are going very well. The Treasure Sale will be June 10 – 13 and VBS is scheduled for June 24, 25, 26.

New Business: AA meetings are now available at the church every Monday night at 6:00 P.M. in the Library.

Caregivers support group for Faith in Action: Karen and Pastor Torri will be learning how to lead a Caregivers support group next month so that they can offer the group other times in the year. Faith in Action has had many requests for this group.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting is February 20. Clerk: Karen Holle



Join in with
friendly conversation
and desserts,
Thursday, February 13th
at 1:00 PM

Bible Study

Monday mornings

10:00 coffee and conversation

10:30 to 11:30 education and
enquiry using the
Upper Room study material.



FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

We are in the winter months at Union Church – services in the Friendship Hall, activities not quite as busy, fewer people around the church and the town, and snow.

But the Board of Financial Stewardship has been busy. We presented our first budget figures to the Church Council in November, completed our 2019 fiscal year reports, reworked our revenue and expense calculations worked with the boards and ministry teams, and in mid-January presented a budget to the Church Council at their January 16th meeting. After good discussions and some reductions and increases, the council established a budget for 2020. He This budget was then presented to the congregational at our Semi-Annual meeting on Sunday, January 26 and was approved.

The total budget for 2020 is balanced and is for \$165,596. This budget is significant higher than last years budget or actual expenses, but does appear realistic for what we as a church have as staff and personnel, our wonderful facilities, and the programs, outreach, and communications and publicity planned.

The Church Council feels that this is an important year for Union Church. This is Pastor Torri's second year with us and this budget reflects our commitment for Union Church to remain a significant and growing asset to our members and our community.

You can get a copy of the 2020 Semi-annual Budget and Financial report in the church office or we can email a copy to you by contacting the church office or the Board of Financial Stewardship at finsec.ucc@gmail.com

Don Hoppe, Chair of the Board of Financial Stewardship

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Sophia Larsen (right) and Sara Artley (left) are the recipients of the Union Congregational Scholarship. Our congregation will continue to pray and encourage them in their journey.

Below shows the scholarship recipients with their families.



Ash Wednesday occurs on February 26th this year. We will once again worship at St. Paul's on that evening and will hold joint ecumenical community services throughout the season. Stay tuned for more information as Lent draws near.

Lent Services will be on Wednesday evenings March 5th through April 1st at one of the churches in Hackensack. Please check the bulletin or website for more information in the coming weeks.

Celebrating the Past – Myra Damm, historian

Mom's morning out – a bit of history

This is some information that was taken from the minutes of the Children's Task Force Records as it was being formed. The records are in the History files.

The Morning Out program is a shared ministry of Union Congregational Church and St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

This is a time for play for the children and a break for their primary caregivers. Children from infancy to age 5 will be cared for.

This program was presented to the UCC Council in May, 1993 by Rev. Sheila Hunter, as part of the Children's Task Force. At the time, it was offered on Wednesday mornings from 9 to noon and proved to be successful. Volunteers came from both churches, with St. Paul's Church hosting the program in Summer. The Fall and Winter program was held at Union Congregation.

As the years have gone by, St. Paul's no longer participates in the program, the time offered is now on Friday mornings and is still being used by Moms in the area.

NOOMA – SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION SERIES

NOOMA is a video series that sparks discussion on topics that are meaningful and applicable to every day life. Subjects such as anger, love and grief are discussed through thought provoking questions that challenge participants into a deeper faith in Christ. All are welcome to join us. Each discussion is a stand-alone lesson. It is not a series you need to sign up or commit to. Come when you can or when the topic seems interesting to you. Below are the dates and topics. If you have any questions, please call Pastor Torri.

- ◆ Sunday, Feb. 2nd – “Flame” (What is involved in really loving someone?)
- ◆ Wednesday, Feb. 5th – “Flame” (What is involved in really loving someone?)
- ◆ Sunday, Feb 16th – “Rain” (Where is God in the storm?)
- ◆ Wednesday, Feb. 19th – “Rain” (Where is God in the storm?)

SOUP-R-BOWL SUNDAY

Join us in the lower level fellowship hall on Sunday, February 2 to watch the Super Bowl on the big screen.

We will gather at 4:30 for an early dinner (soup, of course!) and be ready for the 5:30 kick off.

Soup will be provided, please bring a snack to share and your friends and neighbors as well.

NEW MEMBER CLASS

If you are interested in becoming a member or associate member of Union Congregational, there will be a new members class Sunday, February 9th after church in the Library from 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM.

We will also offer a Membership Class at the beginning of the summer for those who are returning from their winter homes. The date for that class has not been set.

Please contact Pastor Torri at the office if you are interested in participating.

CHRISTIAN LEARNING

February is the month when we see lots of hearts, flowers, and gifts to remind us of 'love'. However, God's Love for us is not confined to just one month but continues always. Here are some examples:

The Union Congregational Church Memorial Scholarship

The Union Church Scholarship Ministry Team hosted an Awards Ceremony on Sunday, January 12th, as part of the morning service. College freshmen Sophia Larsen and Sara Artley are our 2019 scholars and each received a check of \$1,000.

Sophia is currently attending St. Catherine's in the Twin Cities. Sara is attending college in Grand Rapids with plans to attend the University of Minnesota, Duluth Campus. We were privileged to have both scholars and their families attend the ceremonies and reception in Friendship Hall in person. Sophia is the daughter of Vic and Johanna Larsen of Hackensack. Sara is the daughter of Tammy Artley of Walker. Congratulations to both scholars and their families!

Community Outreach Winter Fun

The Christian Learning Team is pleased to announce that for our second entry in the Back To Hack Snow Sculpture Contest we received Second Place. Great work! Sue, Pastor Torri, Tommy, and others were part of this effort. Lots of snow and bad weather caused some events to be changed but again all completed work to best of ability. A bear and cub were part of the sculpture by church front door. Loved your creation!

Community Meal Numbers Up

Community Meal has been going strong on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM in the Lower Level with delicious hot meals and warm fellowship shared. No cost, but donations welcome.

Menu

(please keep an eye on local papers, the church bulletins, or ask Sue Johnson for future dates):

Feb. 5th – Turkey ala King

Feb. 12th – Beef and Pork Roast

Feb. 19th – Goulash

Monday Morning Bible Study Report

Coffee and conversation 10:00-10:30 AM in Library. Bible Study meets 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM and uses Upper Room materials. We celebrated with a small luncheon over the holidays. We recently had family members of regulars join us this past Monday. All are welcome to 'drop in' any time and share our faith journey.

We're a very supportive group!

(continues on page 9)

(continued from page 8)

New Opportunities

Treasure Sale 2020 is Coming!

June 10, 11, 12, and 13 are the dates. While we do sell items all year, the Big Four Days are peak times for action to support the work of our Youth and Families Programming. Please look into your hearts and homes for items to donate for this important cause.

Christian Learning uses the resources to support VBS Programs, Mission Trips, Youth Outreach and Studies.

If you have items to donate, please contact Cindy/Heidi to make the arrangements. Larger furniture or Man Cave items may be picked up or delivered just prior to the sale but it is helpful to have an idea just what the items would be. Donation receipts are available. We have had great sales in recent years- let's make this the best yet!

VBS Programming is Flying Ahead !

Dates for VBS are June 24, 25, 26.

The last two years we have been completing a *Globetreckers* unit as we travelled around God's World. This year we are moving into the universe with stars, planets, and more. *A Mission To Mars and Beyond* reminds us God is everywhere. We will read Genesis 1:1. The material is exciting and Faith-based. Kids 3 years of age to those entering 8th grade are most welcome to attend. More details later.

Our Morning Out Program Opens More Doors

Morning Out meets on Fridays from 9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon in the Lower Level. We welcome pre-schoolers to join us for supervised free play, art, music, and snacks. Two experienced adults offer tender care at no cost so parents, grandparents, and guardians may keep appointments, run errands, or just have quiet time. Please contact Sue Johnson at (218) 820-3870 for details. Spring is coming soon so sign up now!

The Christian Learning Team is looking for someone interested in assisting with our Bulletin Board across from the Church Office. If you are interested in photos and signs, please contact Jo (651) 274-2145 or any member of our Team. We do great work - let's keep guests and others aware of how God's Love is shared here! Happy Valentine's Day!

-The Christian Learning Team



Men's Fellowship
will be Tuesday,
February 4th, at 9:00AM
Join them for break



GAME NIGHTS

Join us on
January 12th and 26th
at 5:30 p.m.
Bring a dish to share.

kokoro **CORNER**

February 2020



by Kiki Carter Webb

Spring Quarter at the Kokoro Music School

We are excited to announce registration is underway for Spring Quarter at the Kokoro Music School. Lessons are \$240 per quarter with a 10% discount for Union members. Most lessons are held on Mondays, but arrangements can be made for other days and times. Register now for Spring Quarter which starts Monday, March 30th!

February Open Mic

Inviting you all to attend the next Express Yourself Open Mic sponsored by the Kokoro Center for Music and the Performing Arts. The open mic is held Sunday, February 9th at 2 PM at Union Church, on the lower level. Parking in back. Fancy coffees, teas and baked treats available for purchase. Suggested donation is \$5 per person. Ryan Pels is our guest emcee.

The theme for February 9th is "The Many Faces of Love." Lynnette Dirks will be giving a short offering on this month's theme.

Hope you can all come and support Kokoro, our friends, and local talent as they step up to perform and entertain us! Put this on your calendar, please!

Kiki

KOKORO CENTER FOR MUSIC & THE PERFORMING ARTS

MUSIC LESSONS

Learn to play an instrument.

Learn to read music.

Have fun doing it!

\$25 per half hour lesson

Ages 3 - 103+



For more info email kokoroperformingarts@gmail.com
or call (218) 831-0942

Kokoro Center for Music and the Performing Arts is a non profit organization.

WHAT YOU CAN LEARN AT KOKORO


Flute • Clarinet • Saxophone • Trumpet • French Horn
Trombone • Baritone/Euphonium • Tuba • Voice
Acoustic Guitar • Electric Guitar • Keyboard • Electric Bass
Ukulele • Music Theory • Songwriting • Arranging
Music Composition • Live Sound • Home Recording

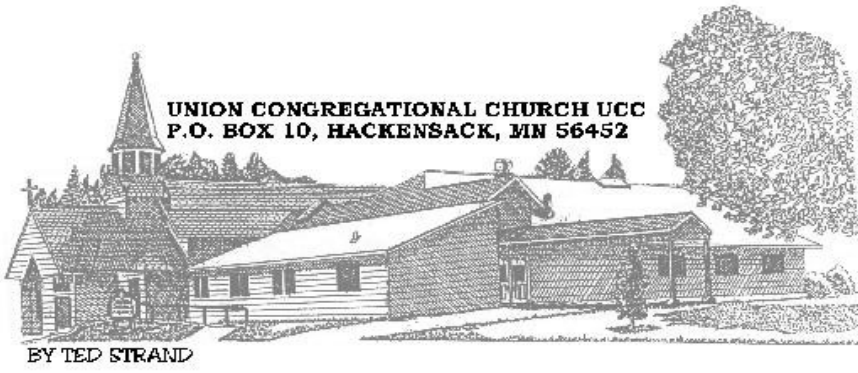


Bone Builders
M-W-F 1:30-2:30 pm

Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN FEBRUARY 2020

* = Community Event held at the church

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 Worship 9:30am Communion Fellowship 10:30am 11:00am NOOMA 4:30pm Soup'R' Bowl Sunday	3 10:00am—11:30am Upper Room Bible Study 6:00pm AA Meeting *	4 9:00am—10:00am Men's Fellowship	5 5:30pm Community Table 6:30pm NOOMA	6	7 9:00am—12:00pm Morning Out	1 SATURDAY 2:00pm Drum Circle *
9 Worship 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am 11:00am New Member Class 2:00pm Kokoro Open Mic * 5:30pm Game Night	10 10:00am—11:30am Upper Room Bible Study 6:00pm AA Meeting *	11 9:30am Congregational Life Meeting 5:30pm Financial Team Meeting	12 2:00pm Justice Team Ministry Meeting 5:30pm Community Table	13 1:00pm Women's Fellowship	14 9:00am—12:00pm Morning Out 	15
16 Worship 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am 11:00am NOOMA	17 10:00am—11:30am Upper Room Bible Study 6:00pm AA Meeting *	18	19 5:30pm Community Table 6:30pm NOOMA	20 1:00pm Council	21 9:00am—12:00pm Morning Out	22
23 Worship 9:30am Fellowship 10:30am 11:00am Christian Learning Meeting 5:30pm Game Night	24 10:00am—11:30am Upper Room Bible Study 6:00pm AA Meeting *	25	26 5:30pm Community Table	27 1:00pm—4:00pm Fiber Arts *	28 9:00am—12:00pm Morning Out	29



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

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED



2020

Ash Wednesday will be at St Paul's on
the 26th of February.

New Member's Class on
Sunday the 9th!

