

The Union News

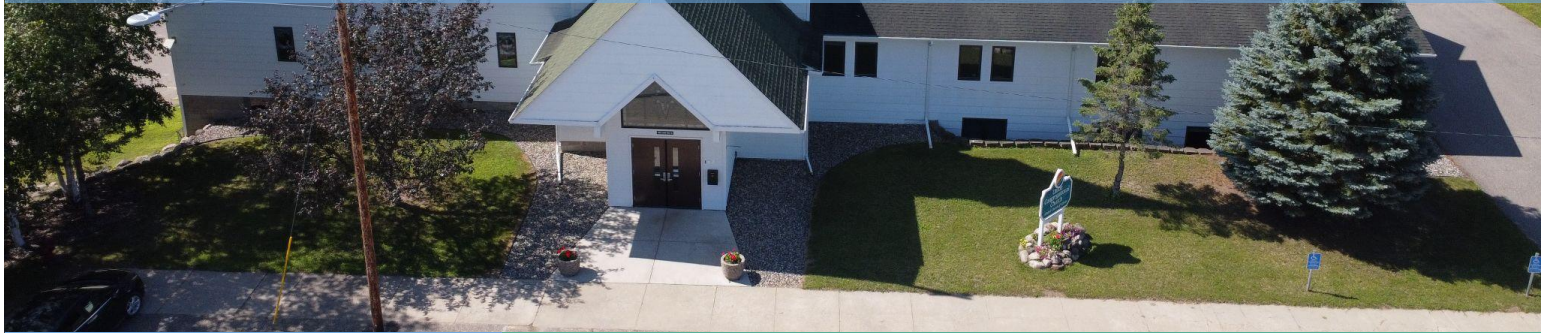
Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
401 Lake Avenue East, PO Box 10, Hackensack, MN 56452-0010

"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>
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JULY 2024

Notes from Rev. Torri Vande Zande

One of my favorite things about Union Congregational is the diversity we have within our congregation.

Many of us come from various backgrounds when it comes to faith tradition, political beliefs, and economic status. We disagree on many issues, but we have made a commitment to one another to be a community of diverse believers, sharing with one another and to be accepting of all. And with God's unconditional love, we come together to worship, to nurture each other, and reach out with love to all persons. That's our mission statement by the way. And we live in the messiness of it.

In July, we are wrapping up our sermon series called "Practical Love," and we will be transitioning into a time when we will be learning more about the history and polity of the United Church of Christ and how we function as the body of Christ. I hope you will join us as we explore how our faith tradition was formed, how Union Congregational UCC came to be,



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
Vice Moderator	Gunder Austin
Clerk	Karen Holle
Board of Financial Stewardship	Don Hoppe
Ministry Teams:	
Congregational Life	Caryl Allan
Facilities	Mike Bohanon & Kerry Swenson
Personnel	Connie Schmitt
Worship	Heidi Hoppe
Men's Fellowship	Stan Kumpula
Women's Fellowship	Joni Kumpula
Adult Learning	Linnea Dietrich
Tech Team	Mike Schmitt
Online Sales	Cindy Gulbrandson
Justice Ministry Team	Sue Kimmel

PASTOR/PARISH MINISTRY TEAM

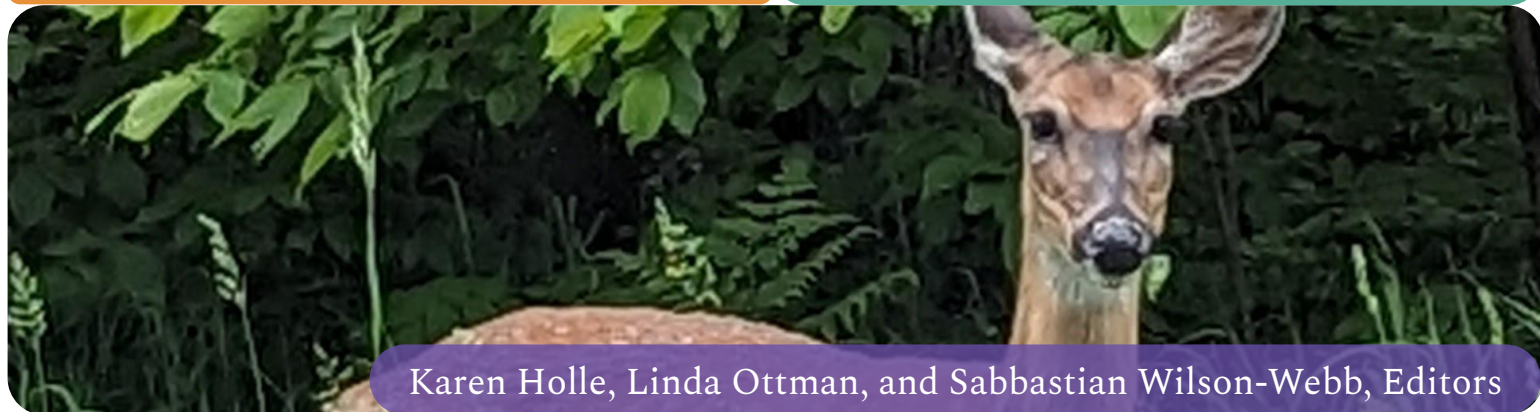
A committee is being formed to establish a pastor/parish ministry team which would help cultivate an open, affirmative, and creative relationship between the pastor and the congregation. The intent is to be a sounding board for the congregation and Pastor Torri, to bring concerns and questions on topics, events, and subjects that come up as we move forward. Several people in our congregation attended a training last year to learn how this team would benefit the church.



JULY BIRTHDAYS

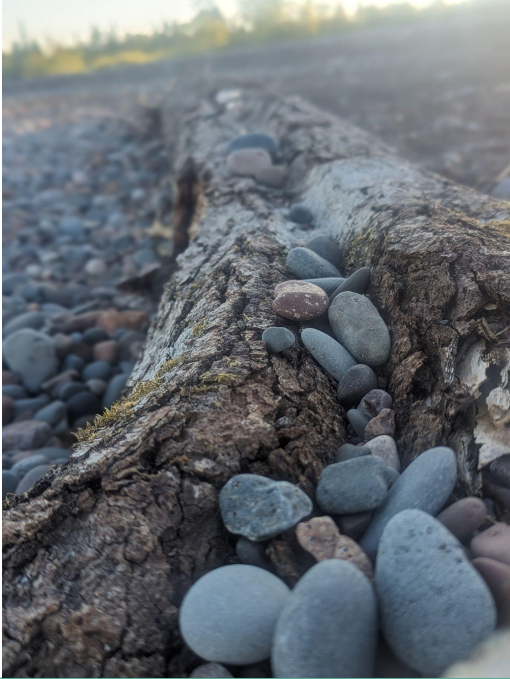
- July 4 **Gus Kaubisch**
- July 8 **Fred Smith**
- Bonnie Hiniker**
- July 11 **Bruce Carlson**
- Rev. Torri Vande Zande**
- July 15 **James Hoppe**
- July 16 **Katie Knutson**
- July 19 **Gracee Rudkin**
- Charlie Helscher**
- July 21 **Linda Ottman**
- July 23 **Gary Dietrich**
- July 25 **George Strawn**
- July 26 **Chris Hoppe**
- July 30 **Gary Kwong**

Happy Birthday!



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

Continued from Page 1



how we function as a church, and our passion to make an impact on the wider community. We will begin this series on July 7th.

This will lead up to our semi-annual meeting on July 28th after our worship service where we will be informed about what has been happening over this past year.

I have been so honored to be the pastor of this church and a resident in this community. My hope is that we continue to be a light in this community and do our best to imitate the life of Jesus Christ to those around us. May Christ shine in us, through us and around us to bring about God's kingdom here on earth. We do this by loving God and loving others in the name of Jesus Christ.

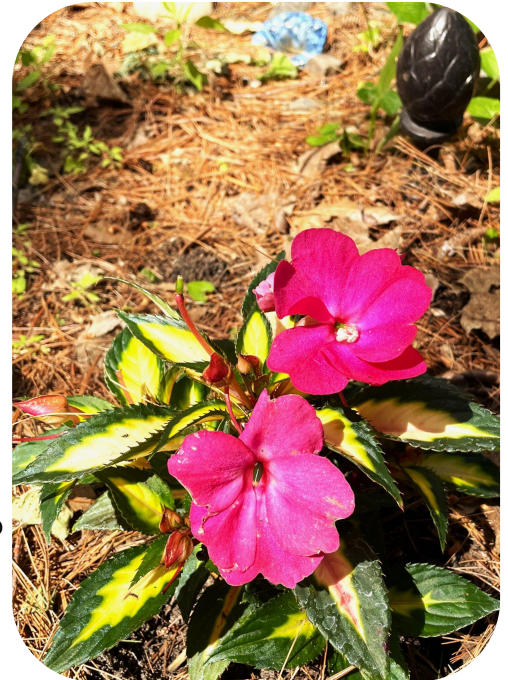
Peace,
Pastor Torri

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. We had quite a wet start! Of course, that means that everything in the woods is growing lusciously, even the mosquitoes and poison ivy. That is a cross we will have to bear!

Our church is a vibrant place this time of year. There seems to be something going on all the time. If the July Fundraiser Dinner put on by the Outreach Team is anything like the June dinner, it will be a great success. There were lots of people in attendance to sample the delicious spaghetti and to hear Dick Kimmel's Acoustic Jam in June. Come have pulled pork sandwiches and listen to Dick's great group of musical friends on July 17 from 5:00-6:00 pm.

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 messages on Love (our current series) are enlightening and apropos as we navigate this election year.



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

Heidi Hoppe, Chair; Sheryl Kaubisch, Gracee Rudkin, Mary Parrish, and Caryl Allan



COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 18, 2024 DRAFT *(Not approved by council)*

PRESENT: Marilyn and Steve Erickson, Gunder Austin, Pastor Torri, Caryl Allan, Linnea Dietrich, Mary Parrish, Mike Bohanon, Sue Kimmel, Heidi and Don Hoppe, Cindy Gulbrandson, Karen Holle
The agenda was approved as written. The minutes were approved Heidi/Don

Sabbatical Update: Connie and Marilyn will be meeting soon to finalize a contract with Sheila Hunter who will be assisting the church during Pastor Torri's sabbatical.

Discussion today about how a funeral would be handled while Pastor Torri is away. No funerals will be allowed without a Funeral Director. Sheila Hunter will contact Worship and Tech to let them know about the funeral. Caryl Allan will coordinate food for the funeral as the head of Congregational Life.

New Business: Pastor/Parish Team – Currently steps are being taken to establish a pastor/parish ministry team which would help cultivate an open, affirmative, and creative relationship between the pastor and the congregation. Several people in our congregation attended a training last year to learn how this team would benefit the church.

Semi-Annual Meeting – Semi-annual meeting July 28. Reports due to Linda July 1. Announcement to congregation on July 7, 14, 21. This is an important meeting to ratify the new constitution.

Pastor's Monthly Report to Council - Pastor Torri reviewed her report with Council. She was pleased that the Minnesota Conference went very well. Thanks to Mike Schmitt who led a tech workshop on Friday and Saturday. The workshop was very well received. Also, thanks to Tammy for making the communion bread for the 150 pastors who had gathered together for communion.

Board of Facilities - Mike Bohanon reported that a structural engineer is coming Monday to look at a wall in the Friendship Hall that is bowing out. It appears that the problem is really in the basement where a wall is caving in and is pushing floor joists out. This could be a very expensive problem to fix. More information next month.

Gutters and downspouts are clogged and may need screens to keep debris from accumulating.

The Friendship Hall carpet needs cleaning. Terry Hirschi is willing to help with that project.

Board of Financial Stewardship - Don reported that May was a good month for giving, and we ended with a positive balance of \$4,053. Our income balance for the year and our ability to meet our operating budget is on track.

Ministry Team Reports:

Worship: Average worship attendance over the past month is 43 in the sanctuary and 6 online. Eleven or twelve people participate weekly from Birchview Church.

Adult Learning: Linnea reported the Bible Study group is evolving with 7 or 8 regulars each meeting. Leadership for this group shifts which has worked out well. The Hackensack Camino has 15 people signed up. **Motion: The Hackensack Camino participants may use space in the church for meals and sleeping from 9/11 to 9/15. Gunder/Linnea/passed.** Council also agreed that the Camino group does not need to donate money to the church for use of our space.

Women's Fellowship: Caryl reported that Stan and Don gave a nice presentation on wine preparation for the last WF meeting. In July the presenter will be Molly Wiste, a chainsaw carver who will share some of her expertise and experiences with us.

Justice Ministry Team: Sue reported that Marilyn and Steve are leading the summer JMT book study. The group is reading Possible, How to Survive and Thrive in an Age of Conflict, written by William Ury.

Sue reported that 29 volunteers worked on Friday of the community cleanup, and 22 volunteers worked Saturday to complete the projects on the list. Many of the volunteers were from Union, and Sue is thankful for the help. Sue is looking for someone else to coordinate this project next year.

Other projects the JMT is involved in include: working with the Rural Organizing Project in the area of child care, housing, clean water, and health care. Also members will be attending the Cass County Public Health Forum which is June 26 from 10-12 in Walker.

Fundraising: Steve spoke of several ideas for raising funds for the church. He is looking for more help for his team.

Tech Team: Don gave a short update of the current tech team projects. The focus of Mike's presentation at the MN Conference was "how do you start with nothing and build technical capacity." His presentation was well received!

Outreach: There will be three Fundraisers this summer with the purpose of raising money for the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter food baskets. The first fundraiser was last night. Seventy-two people came for a spaghetti dinner and music. Over \$550 was raised for the food baskets. On July 17, we will have a pulled pork fundraiser for the same purpose.

Meeting adjourned: Linnea/Heidi

Pastor Torri offered a benediction. Next meeting is July 18.

Notes by Karen Holle, Clerk.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Hi, wow we already made it to July!

June was really busy. Everyone back and so much to do. I hope July calms down. We ladies are having a good time at Fellowship. If you haven't come, you are missing out on great fellowship, treats, and programs. Our wine-making session was fabulous, and we thank Don and Stan for all the interesting information.

This month local artist Molly Wiste will be presenting a show and tell on chainsaw carving and her skills. Put it on your calendar, the second Thursday as always. Be sure to put August 8th on your calendar too! That is when we take our trip to the Munsinger Gardens in St. Cloud! It will take most of the day because we will stop for lunch in St Cloud also. You must sign up so that we know how big our transportation needs to be. Come for the fun!

See you in church, Joni

THROUGH KODA'S EYES

Bandit's

Hello Humans,

This is Bandit (the cat). Koda decided to take a month off to be lazy, so the responsibility to write this news article has landed in MY lap.

I have owned my human now for over 11 years. I found her walking the streets in Iowa. She had no meaning to her life until she found me!



It is amazing to think how life has changed over the last decade. Yes, I have grown a little fatter, a little slower, a bit more sore in my joints... But so has my human. I think aging is hard for both of us. For me, if I was a human, I would be 65 years old. I'm no spring chicken, but I have a lot of life in me yet. I may not be able to do everything I used to do, but I am still an asset in this household. If it wasn't for me, Koda would never know the joy of chasing chipmunks, and my human would never wake up in the morning!

Yes... We are getting older, but that doesn't mean we become less valuable. I can't jump off the top of the refrigerator anymore, but I can still zoom around the living room at 12:30 in the morning! I have to remind myself to focus on the things I CAN do rather than on what I can't do.

My family (my human and I guess Koda) still need me. I am the foundation of our little family! They would fall apart without me! So I move forward, knowing my limitations but never taking for granted the life I still have ahead of me.

Well, I'm tired, so I'm going to take a nap now. The sun is shining and I have to steal Koda's sunspot before he thinks it's his. He has yet to learn... Everything is mine.

Have a cat scratchy day!

Bandit (the cat)



Celebrating the Past: Summer Vacation Bible School

Myra Damm, Historian

Bible school was held in the summer to give religious instruction to the younger members of the church.

This was usually held for a week, with Bible stories and Bible themes being part of the program. The teachers were volunteers from the congregation. Classes were held by age groups from preschool to 8th grade. Craft classes, lessons, storytelling, and outdoor activities made this a week of fun as well as religious instruction.

The first mention of Bible School in my records was in 1951, with an enrollment of 17. Vacation Bible School continued for many years with our church, together with St. Paul's Lutheran, alternating the churches each year. Slowly the attendance became less, and it has not been done in the past few years, but it left fond memories to all who attended in their youth.

BOARD OF FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Operating Income and Expenses

Giving Income - May	\$ 17,029.00	Year to Date 2024 Giving	\$ 64,748.00
Other Income* - May	\$ 1,586.60	YTD Other Income*	\$ 8,554.73
Total Income	\$ 18,615.60	YTD Total Income	\$ 73,302.73
Expenses - May	\$14,562.53	Year to Date Expenses	\$ 80,929.50
Balance - May	\$ 4,053.07	Balance - Year to Date	\$ -7,626.77
		FY 2024 Prepaid Pledges	\$ 8,100.00
		Previous FY Carryover	\$ 25,111.57
		Final Balance	\$25,584.80

* 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:	\$ 147,534.53
Reserve Savings	\$ 32,393.76
CD's	\$ 165,000.00
Investments	<u>\$ 156,778.63</u>
Total Assets	\$ 501,706.92

Summary

May was a good month for income, and our expenses were a little lower than normal. At this point, our income for June is lower than normal; however our income balance for the year and our ability to meet our operating budget is on track.

We welcome back our seasonal members and friends! It is always so good to see you again in worship and participating in church and community activities.

DISCUSSION GROUP — Sundays in July after Church

Through the month of July, Pastor Torri will be focusing on a sermon series that will take us through the history and polity of the United Church of Christ and how we function as the body of Christ. We will be exploring how our faith tradition was formed, how Union Congregational UCC came to be, how we function as a church, and our passion to make an impact on the wider community. This series will begin on July 7th.

Many people in our congregation come from diverse faith traditions including Catholic, Lutheran, and Evangelical, and may not know much about the United Church of Christ. To add to this, there may be some who have questions but don't know who to ask or how to find the answers they are looking for. To help navigate through this, Pastor Torri is offering a discussion time that will be held July 7th, 14th, and 21st in the church library from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This will be a time to ask questions about the sermon, theology, history, and polity of the UCC. It will also be a time to discuss our views and hopefully become more aware of our diversity and commitment to be unified as the body of Christ. Everyone is welcome to join the conversation.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

We didn't have any meetings in June. I am repeating the message I put in the newsletter last month to see if anyone wants to go on one of these day trips. Steve Erickson and I talked about interesting sightseeing trips in Minnesota. He has been to many places in the state and came up with 4 of these day trips that could be of interest to all of you. Here is a summary of these, and we would like to hear from you as to your interest in going on one or any of them. You can google these to find more details:

1. Hjemkomst Center: Exact replica of a 9th century Viking ship. The museum has other items of interest. Located in Moorhead and open 9-5, M-Sat. Cost is \$11 for seniors.
2. Legacy of the Lakes Museum: Located in Alexandria, they have a Boat Show on Saturday, July 13th. It has many antique boats and motors in the museum, and on this day, the chance to ride in the original 1907 Fay and Bowen Launch that is quite rare and was donated by the late Jack Thomas, who founded Mann Lake Bee Supply here in Hackensack. Cost is \$8 for seniors.
3. Western MN Steam Threshers Reunion in Rollag: Aug 30th through Sept. 2nd (Labor Day Weekend). All sorts of ancient farm equipment, steam engines, etc. A one day cost is \$15.
4. Lost Forty: A forest area near Blackduck that logging crews missed. There are 300- to 400- year-old virgin pines. There is a one mile self-guided walk unless you just go to part of the forest.

Please let me know if you have any interest in going on any of these trips!

Stan Kumpula

MODERATOR'S MOMENT

While it is important to honor the separation of church and state, we find ourselves in a difficult position when we Christians hear campaign messages about Jesus' preferences. And believe it or not, neither of us knows how to respond to this! Yet our lifelong profession has always been to mediate between two sides of issues! After much thought and prayer, we have decided to respond here as an example of how we church members can have a conversation about our differences without alienating or offending each other.

One of the first responses could be something like: "I have never heard that before, please tell me more." Asking a question to understand this further is what we mediators call "interested curiosity," which respectfully invites more conversation instead of questioning someone, which may put them on the defensive. Sharing information about our different perspectives allows us to better understand and continue to respect and care about each other and learn more about the whole picture in this important presidential race. Listening is most important and respectful.

So, we invite you to have difficult conversations with those who may have different perspectives and beliefs about the candidates and messages being promoted in this election. Let's not allow the politics to interfere with Jesus' directive to love one another.

MONTHLY FUNDRAISER MEALS!



This summer we are having monthly Fundraiser Meals! They are on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the Friendship Hall.

The proceeds from these meals will help purchase the meat (chicken or ham) that will go into the Holiday Baskets for the Hackensack Food Shelf. The holiday baskets are given to families at Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. They help families in our area who may not have the resources to purchase their holiday meals.

Each holiday, 30-40 baskets are prepared for local families. The meat needed to fill these baskets cost \$350 per holiday. The hope is to raise \$1,050 so there are enough funds to cover all three holidays. Our Men's Fellowship group has partnered with the Lions, Faith in Action, and the Hackensack Food Shelf for years, and we hope they can continue this important tradition.

The meals will be a "free-will donation." So come to the church July 17th to eat some great food and give money to a good cause. Our menu this month is pulled pork sandwiches, beans, and potato salad.

Our menu for the August 19th meal will be Beef stroganoff, green beans, salad, buns, dessert. If you would like to help prepare, serve, or clean up, please contact the office at 218-675-6300. As an added bonus to the evening, Northwoods Acoustic Jam, hosted by Dick Kimmel will be present to provide a fun and musical atmosphere.

JUSTICE MINISTRY TEAM

There is a work of art at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, entitled La Soledad (The Loneliness). La Soledad is a bronze sculpture that is a single empty chair, elevated on stilt-like oars. The worn paddles suggest the migration or passage of people, serving as an unsteady support against the challenges and solitude of our human journeys.

I am drawn to the sculpture because there are times that I want to climb up in the empty chair and lament. I need to release the frustrations of the world so I am not a walking machine, distanced or detached from the troubles in our world. We have been called to love our neighbor with a love that protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres, and we are to do this always. Loving our neighbor is challenging but I know if I listen and respect the human journey of others and if I educate myself in areas where I have questions, loving someone becomes more natural. I begin to build community despite differences, and my lamenting for myself and others calls me to action for "Doing nothing can be worse than the act itself." – Arnold Dahl-Wooley

At Union Congregational Church, where all are welcome and love abounds, may we understand our neighbor more completely so love flows through us more deeply, so when a time of lamenting comes we can get through it with faith, hope, and above all else love.

La soledad created by Kcho (Alexis Leiva Machado)



ONGOING EVENTS



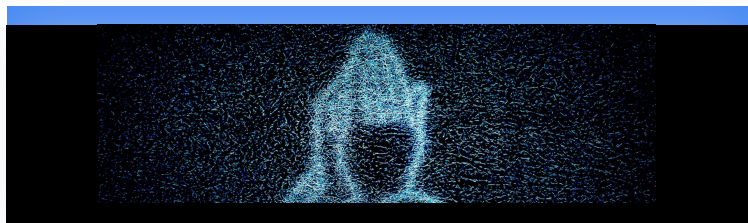
Women's Fellowship
Thursday, July 11th at 1:00 pm
Chainsaw Art with Molly Wiste

Any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at media.ucchackmn@gmail.com.



Women's Bible Study
2nd & 4th Wednesdays from
5:30 to 7:00 pm

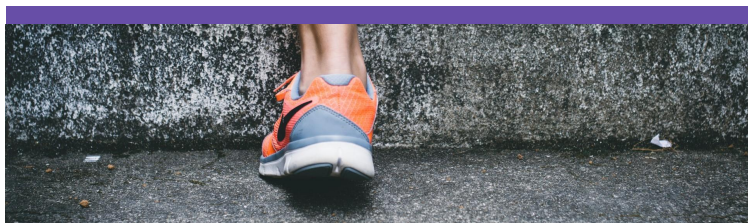
Any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at media.ucchackmn@gmail.com.



Lectio Divina

Every Wednesday at 4:00 pm
In the Church Library
(No Lectio on July 3rd)

Meaning "divine reading," Lectio Divina is a meditation and prayer practice intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's word.



Fit2Move Exercise Group

Every Wednesday at 10:00 am
In the Friendship Hall

Any questions, please call the office at 218-675-6300 or email the church at media.ucchackmn@gmail.com.

The Semi-Annual meeting will be held July 28th after the service.

JULY FUNDRAISING MEAL



Wednesday, July 17th, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Friendship Hall
Monthly Fundraiser Meals held throughout the summer!

Free-will donation.

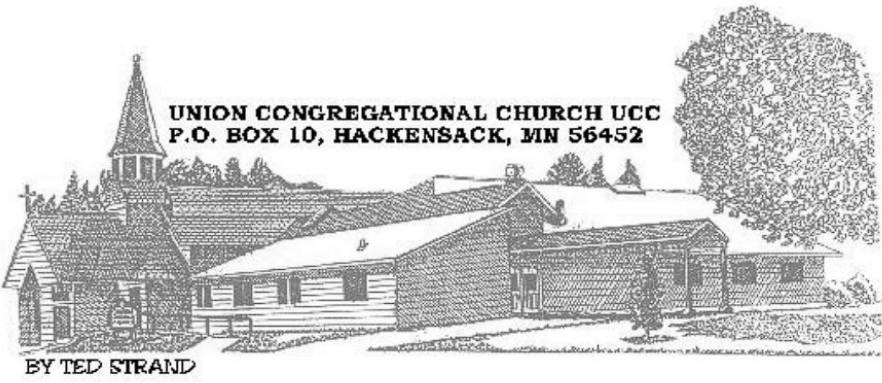
Menu: Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Beans, Potato Salad

Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

July 2024

* Community event

SUNDAY	1 MONDAY	2 TUESDAY	3 WEDNESDAY	4 THURSDAY	5 FRIDAY	6 SATURDAY
7 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	8 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting* 7:30 pm Book Study	9 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	10 10:00 am Fi2Move 4:00 pm Lectio Divina 5:30 pm Women's Bible Study	11 1:00 pm Women's Fellowship	12 Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 4:30 to 6 pm Izaak Walton League Spaghetti Fundraiser Dinner in Friendship Hall	13
14 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 11:00 am Worship Ministry Team Meeting 1:00 pm Birchview Church	15 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting* 7:30 pm Book Study	16 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	17 10:00 am Fi2Move 4:00 pm Lectio Divina 5:00-6:00 pm Fundraiser Meal 5:00-7:00 pm Northwoods Acoustic Jam	18 10:00am Dream Group 1:00-3:00 pm Council Meeting	19 Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders*	20
21 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	22 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	23 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	24 10:00 am Fi2Move 4:00 pm Lectio Divina 5:30 p.m. Women's Bible Study	25 1:00-3:00 pm Fiber Arts*	26 Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders*	27
28 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 10:30 am Semi-Annual Meeting 1:00 pm Birchview Church	29 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	30 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	31 10:00 am Fi2Move 4:00 Lectio Divina			



UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH UCC
P.O. BOX 10, HACKENSACK, MN 56452

BY TED STRAND

FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED



2024

Come eat!
July 17th Fundraiser



THE UNION NEWS