

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

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey—you are welcome here"

An "Open and Affirming" Congregation

Church Office: (218) 675-6300 Pastor: Rev. Torri Vande Zande https://www.unioncchackensack.com Email: media.ucchackmn@gmail.com



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Calendar

### NOVEMBER 2024

### Pastoral Message by Steve Erickson

10-26-24

It was a privilege and a joy for me to give the sermon last Sunday. It gave me an opportunity to share some of my ideas with everyone. While ideas are important, just as important are the relationships and the good people that Marilyn writes about in her Moderator's Moment. I think Union Congregational holds a special place in the hearts of all who participate in its services and activities, especially the "food" activities.

### FOOD

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Yes, food. I was trying to understand why Union Church has become important to me and why I enjoy being a part of it so much. I find joy and pleasure in the interactions in the social hall, particularly around the sharing of food, be it the Sunday morning coffee hour or the community fundraising meals, or other special events that are made more special by the sharing of food.

In a real sense, these gatherings in the social hall are perhaps as sacred and important as the preparation of the worship service by the Worship Committee and the Tech Committee, who plan the Sunday service in the sanctuary.

Continues on Page 3

Dick Kimmel

### **CHURCH STAFF**

Pastor	Rev. Torri Vande Zande
Office Administrator	Linda Ottman
Secretary / Tech	Sabbastian Wilson-Webb
Financial Secretary	Caryl Allan
Treasurer	Sheryl Kaubisch
Bell Choir Director	Heidi Hoppe
Musicians	Sheryl Kaubisch
	Kathleen Millberg
	Barb Nish

### **BOARDS**

Financial Board	Don Hoppe, Sheryl Kaubisch, Caryl Allan
Facilities Board	Mike Bohanon, Kerry Swenson
Personnel	Connie Schmitt, Chris Swenson

### **LEADERSHIP**

Moderators	Marilyn McKnight & Steve Erickson
Vice Moderator	Gunder Austin
Clerk	Karen Holle
Board of Financial Stewardship	Don Hoppe

### **MINISTRY TEAMS**

Adult Learning	Linnea Dietrich
Congregational Life	Caryl Allan
Justice Ministry Team	Sue Kimmel
Worship	Heidi Hoppe
Women's Fellowship	Joni Kumpula
Men's Fellowship	Stan Kumpula
Online Sales	Cindy Gulbrandson
Tech Team	Mike Schmitt



### NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

November 5 Caryl Allan

November 7 Jan Bontrager

November 14 David Holle

November 20 Marilyn McKnight Erickson

November 21 Kiki Carter Webb

November 23 Barb Mann

November 30 Richard Vanden-Eykel

**Bob Iversen** 

Happy Birthday!



### Continued from Page 1

Union would be missing a very important element were it not for the people involved in preparing, serving, and cleaning up after a food event. In fact, food is so important that the sacrament of communion involves bread and wine in remembrance of Christ sharing the food at the last supper. Too bad the writers of the gospels failed to include in the narrative those who made the meal possible, so they could be recognized and honored for their contributions. (I guess papyrus was expensive in those days).

Food is life. But more importantly, food is about sharing. Food is about giving. Food plays such a prominent role in so many of the gospel narratives, that without the meals, the feeding of the 5,000 and so many other parables about food, the message would be lacking. Food is life, and life is about sharing.

Just as loving your neighbor, your adversaries, or your relatives, is made easier by good communication skills, sharing a meal enhances the likelihood of a positive interaction with others. We mediators say that 60% of the work of resolving conflict is just getting everyone to the table. When a meal is involved, they are already there at the table. So maybe we should just focus on the meal and the sharing of food, and the good communication skills will hopefully follow.

Going forward, the Fundraising Committee, the Outreach Committee and the rest of the Council are planning a number of food events next year. I also know that for many, the upcoming holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas present challenges. Family may be living too far away to get together. One may not have the resources or the facilities to entertain a meal of friends or neighbors. However, we have a world class kitchen at Union. Sharing a meal and conversation with others is made easier by the facilities we have. Last year at both Thanksgiving and Christmas, many of us gathered in the Friendship Hall rather than be home at such a sacred time of the year. In fact, a potluck meal is the ultimate sharing event because everyone gets to contribute.

This year, for Christmas Day, many of us who cannot spend Christmas with family, plan to gather in the Friendship Hall for a potluck sharing of Christmas dishes. But most importantly, the food is secondary to the love and sharing that goes on among all of us. Last year we also watched Miracle on 34th Street and It's a Wonderful Life!

Thanks to all of you for making the Kitchen/Friendship Hall such a special, sacred place that provides us the opportunity to gather together every Sunday and for special events.

### Celebrating the Past: A Growing Church

Myra Damm, Historian

In 1914, plans were finalized to build a church on Lot 9, Block 3 in Hackensack. In 1917, the church was finished. It was a simple white frame building situated on the main highway in a grove of pines. Also in 1917, a bell was presented to the church by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Stuart. It was used as a fire warning for the town's people, as well as a call for church.

In 1927, the church was reorganized under a new constitution. There were three organizations within the church at the time: Sunday School, Ladies Aid, and Young People's Society. The church membership was 42.

In 1951, Mrs. Rose Lathrop deeded a plot of 3.59 acres of land to Union Church. The Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church merged in 1957 to become the United Church of Christ. That same year Union Church voted to be yoked with Walker Community Church.

The following year Rev. Harold Mercier was called to serve the yoked parish. These were years of growth and change. More next time.



### **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

### OCTOBER 17, 2024 DRAFT (Not yet approved by council)

**Present:** Heidi and Don Hoppe, Mike Bohanon, Marilyn McKnight, Steve Erickson, Caryl Allan, Joni and Stan Kumpula, Linnea Dietrich, Mike and Connie Schmitt, Mary Parrish, Cindy Gulbranson, and Judy Hoopman

Marilyn called the meeting to order. Heidi offered a short prayer.

The agenda was approved with two additional points to cover: Investment Advisory Committee information and Christmas Concert plans. The minutes were approved as written. Heidi/Joni

**Sabbatical Update**: The church is continuing to do well regarding quality of the worship services and administration with Pastor Torri's sabbatical.

**Board of Facilities**: No new news about the wall. The wall project is on hold until spring. John and Mike fixed the water leakage that had been occurring in the basement storage area. No news about painting the sign out front. Mike will contact local businesses for bids.

Personnel Board: Connie is wondering what are the church's current needs. She is working on a job description for Tammy who is interested in taking over the church cleaning at four hours per week. Discussion about Tammy as employee (Tammy's preference) or contract worker. Connie is asking for approval from the Board of a budget of up to \$7500. for 50 weeks annually for the custodian position. Connie is also structuring the position regarding weekly, bi-weekly and monthly duties and that the Personnel Board will supervise this position. The worker will be asked to track their work hours each week and submit to Sheryl. Connie will discuss with Kerry Swenson what obligations UCC may have in giving the current cleaning business notice of canceling the service. A motion was made to allow Connie up to \$7500 annually for the position and she will determine an hourly wage with this. Joni/Steve; motion approved.

**Board of Financial Stewardship:** Don presented his report for the month of September to Council. Total income for the month was \$16,539 and expenses were \$18,195. We currently have a positive balance of \$12,528 for the year. Don submitted a report to the Council clarifying this. The 2025 Stewardship Moments have ended. There appears to be some people who have not yet made pledges so Don, Marilyn and Steve will put together a brief notice to the congregation asking for financial support/pledges.

Don will be sending the council members information and forms for planning the 2025 budget based on 2024 information. A motion was made to accept the financial report. Linnea/Connie approved.

There was also discussion about investments, restricted funds, monetary gifts to the church, and how best to manage these monies. Steve recommended some kind of list be put together by the Investment Committee to provide a clearer picture of the financial assets and investments. Don and the committee will work on this for the next meeting.

Congregational Life: Caryl states this is going well.

**Worship:** Heidi reported that Worship is going well. Torri will be back in 4 weeks, and all Sundays have coverage until then. November 17<sup>th</sup> will be a Communion Sunday with Pastor Torri.

**Adult Learning**: Linnea and Heidi provided information about the planned December 21<sup>st</sup> Taize Service at 5PM with Sabbastian playing the music. This will be a contemplative service in recognition of the "dark" night, Solstice, and Christmas. Women's Bible Study is still "on hold" in anticipation of what Pastor Torri is planning after the first of the year – a possible 6-week Bible study class. Lectio continues each Wednesday at 4 and is going strong.

**Women's Fellowship**: October's meeting focused on wine tasting and was a great success. November meeting will focus on making Christmas bags for Birchview, and December there will be the annual cookie and craft sale on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The annual Christmas dinner will be December 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Men's Fellowship:** Stan reported the men continue to meet and discuss the future of the Men's Fellowship. Sharing a breakfast at Viddles and Joe is scheduled for October 23<sup>rd</sup>. The group is contemplating rotating the leadership each meeting. Food boxes will be filled November 25<sup>th</sup>, and Stan is suggesting planning a clean-up date to rake leaves and other outside tasks soon. December 1 is the planned date to put up the church's Christmas trees. Volunteers for all events are always welcome.

**Justice Ministry:** Sue was not present but provided a written report with scheduled events. Highlights include:

- A coordinator for next spring's Neighbor Helping Neighbor is needed.
- Book Study: Poverty, by America by Matthew Desmond will begin in January
- Dawnland, a film/documentary about cultural survival and stolen Native American children in Maine. Sue has a copy and will be sending it out to members.
- Next zoom JMT meeting is November 7 at 7:30 with Jamie Richter from Public Health to discuss the Community Health Assessment, Mental Health, and Opioid Epidemic.

**Fundraising**: Steve and Mike will go to the Chamber to learn what community activities are coming up, what dates are available for any events UCC may want to provide such as a one day Treasure Sale during the summer. Also discussed Joni's plan for a Christmas Concert hosting Sabbastian on Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM. Punch and cookies will be sold during the intermission. Events for the 2025 Chamber calendar must be submitted by November 1<sup>st</sup> for the 2025 year. **Motion made that the Christmas Concert will accept free will donations. Mike/ Heidi, motion approved.** 

**Tech Team:** Mike Schmitt reported that the Tech Team is still selling electronic equipment online. Mike also reported that all the wires have been rewired into the floor to prevent tripping on them. The sanctuary equipment continues to get updated. Use of recordings for services has been utilized twice now. Hard drive and camera updates have been completed. Mike is working on the lighting for the cross in the sanctuary.

**Outreach**: The most recent fundraiser meal served dinner to 65 people, giving \$355 to the Food Shelf. There continues to be a need to get more publicity for the community meals. The Chamber is hosting their annual dinner on November 6 at the Char House. Meals are \$18 a person, RSVP. Council suggested Kirin be asked to attend the meal, and others are welcome to join her.

**Moderator's Moment**: Marilyn gave a warm and heartfelt thank you for all the prayers she has received and stated "It has worked!!"

Old business: No old business.

New Business: Refer to sections Financial Report and Women's Fellowship for information about the investment strategies and Christmas Concert. Karen Holle submitted her letter of resignation effective December 31, 2024. Discussion about job description and a council member assuming Karen's role rather than a congregation member at large as working knowledge about the Council and teams is necessary. The Executive Committee will work on this. Motion to accept Karen's resignation and to recognize Karen's years of dedication and service on a Sunday when she will be present. Connie/Steve motion approved. Steve suggested the church be open to people who have no family or plans on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Tammy will be making a turkey dinner on Thanksgiving, and others are welcome to join this informal meal. Torri's anniversary of her ordination (October 28<sup>th</sup>) and hiring at UCC (November 1<sup>st</sup>) are coming up, and we are all reminded to help acknowledge this.

November newsletter deadline in Tuesday October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Motion to adjourn meeting Joni/Linnea, approved. Next meeting is November 21.

Minutes written by Judy Hoopman

### FROM THE DOG BED OF KNIGHT THE SERVICE DOG

Picture taken at the Firehouse Training in Detroit Lakes, for the July's Class of Veterans at Patriot Assistance Dogs (P.A.D.). This was my 8th Anniversary of being Richard's Service Dog. I'm so very proud of the team that we have become! I let him think that he picked me, but in all reality I picked him by the way I worked for him.

The month of October 2024 is very special for our household as we will be helping out with the Veterans in the October's Class scheduled the week of October 21st through 25th. On the afternoon of October 20th, we will be helping host a Meet And Greet with the Veterans that will be in the class. Richard, Gunder, and I will be spending Sunday and Monday nights as House Mentors.

The following is what is scheduled for the Class:

MONDAY 9:00 AM: The dog trainers will meet and greet the Veterans and will give an outline of the week. Each Veteran will be given a dog to work with and will rotate the dogs several times during the day. Lunch will be ordered in, as there is much for them to learn about. Class will end about 4:30 pm

TUESDAY 9:00 AM: Each Veteran will again be given a dog to work with and again switching dogs several times during the day. First thing there will be more bookwork and then everyone will get ready to venture out to the following places to train in Detroit Lakes: (1st) The Firehouse, (2nd) The Courthouse, (3rd) The Downtown Mall and lunch, (4th) L&M Fleet, and then back to headquarters for more bookwork. Each Veteran is asked to list the top 3 dogs that they would want as their Service Dog, and trainers will discuss the picks and decide who will get what dog will get for the night. Class will end about 4:30 pm

WEDNESDAY 9:00 AM: First off, each Veteran will tell how their night went with the dog they had picked, and any dog changes that are needed are done at this time. Then more book learning and then more off-campus training. Class will end about 4:30 pm, and they will again be taking care of the dog that they are training with for the night.

THURSDAY 9:00 AM: Again each Veteran will report how it's going with the dog that they have. More bookwork and off-campus training, and at 4:30 pm each Veteran and their dog must pass the Canine Good Citizen Test in order to receive a dog.

FRIDAY 9:00 AM: Each Veteran will share how their night went, finish up with any loose ends, and sign all the contracts for them to be able to take their dog home. There is training at about 10:30 am on the City Transit Bus. There is a potluck lunch and completing paperwork, and by about 2 pm all are released to head home.

Knight signing off for this month!





### NEWS FROM THE WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

What a lovely autumn we have had! The trees have been exceptionally beautiful this year, and although we've had a few cool nights and days, we've also had some gloriously warm days, too. The Northern Lights put on a show last month as well. Makes one glad to be alive!

Many of our summer members and friends have headed south for the winter. As a consequence, the back of the sanctuary has been roped off. I know our worship leaders prefer having us closer, as it makes for a more intimate gathering. So please don't hesitate to move closer to the front.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sheryl as she heals from her elbow injury. We miss her at the piano every week and hope she heals quickly and returns as good as new.

Pastor Torri will be returning to us in a few weeks. As part of that welcome back service we will have an opportunity to speak, letting her know what we felt and what we learned during her sabbatical. Please consider sharing your thoughts during the service on November 17th.

Worship Ministry Team: Heidi Hoppe, Caryl Allan, Sheryl Kaubisch, Gracee Rudkin, and Mary Parrish.



### **MODERATOR'S MOMENT**

"Love makes the world go round" is a saying that we seem to forget in these troubled times in our country and in fact, in our world! Jesus said "Love One Another as I have loved you" without any exceptions. Love your neighbor as yourself, or as I teach in mediation seminars, find something to love in another, even if you need to really dig deep to find the speck of goodness in that other person – and then find a way to make that love grow. Lead with love.

A highlight of each month for me is our Church Council meeting where each member acts out of love for this church, and for each member of the council! For me personally, it lifts me up and I always feel physically better and emotionally high by the end of our meeting agenda! We work out our differences with love, understanding, and appreciation of each other no matter what, regardless of our present-day political differences.

Our last council meeting was a bit different as we received the resignation of our beloved church secretary and UCC Hackensack Church Clerk, Karen Holle. Karen has served many years in those capacities and more. Recently she has divided her time between Hackensack and Duluth, where she and David have an apartment, and they can be close to their grandchildren. Karen will be greatly missed by the council and even more so at all other the church functions where she is always there to help. She is not leaving, just cutting back on her present responsibilities. Her love for the church will continue when she can be with us, and her love and dedication to the council and the formal work of Clerk will be greatly missed.

May God be with each member of our beloved Church as we navigate the outcome of our elections in November.

Marilyn McKnight, Moderator



Greetings! Happy November. Finally, it's time to wear sweaters and jackets! Hope this finds you all happy and content, cause there's lots to do. First, I hope you all have a wonderful and blessing-filled Thanksgiving. We had a great wine tasting meeting. Did you know that to really taste a glass of wine you need to take and swirl three sips in your mouth? Then the true flavor comes to life. That's after you have swirled and smelled the wine.... Good to know, hum? I think we all learned lots of wine tips.

On November 14<sup>th</sup> we will have our election and make Christmas gift bags. Its lots of fun but if it's not your thing you can have fun and critique. We will decorate bags for our Birchview Gardens church members too. Above all we always have good conversations and fellowship with nummy treats. Please put it on your calendar (it already probably is).

Our December is always busy. Our Cookie Sale is Sunday December 8<sup>th</sup>, our Congregational Thank You Luncheon is the 12<sup>th</sup>, and our Christmas concert is Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. We hope you will all be involved. We'll talk more at the meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1 o'clock sharp!

See you in church, Joni

### **BOARD OF FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP**

### **Operating Income and Expenses**

Giving Income – Sept	\$ 15,125.00	Year to Date 2024 Giving	\$107,564.00
Other Income* - Sept	\$ 1,414.00	YTD Other Income*	\$ 12,914.73
Total Income	\$ 16,539.00	YTD Total Income	\$ 120,478.73
Expenses - September	\$ 18,195.16	Year to Date Expenses	\$ 141,161.45
Balance - September	-\$ 1,656.16	Balance - Year to Date	\$ -20,682.72
		FY 2024 Prepaid Pledges	\$ 8,100.00
		Previous FY Carryover	\$ 25,111.57
		Final Balance	\$ 12,528.85

<sup>\*</sup> Other income includes online sales, 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.

### **Summary**

September income was quite strong, but our expenses were higher than normal. At this point, our income balance for the year and our ability to meet our operating budget remains questionable. We are looking more closely at our expenses, especially regarding facilities, which are greater than expected and budgeted. Also, giving has been less than expected. Good giving and completion of pledges is necessary to have a balanced 2024 budget.

The 2025 Stewardship campaign is behind, compared to last year at this time. As of October 19, we have received 35 pledges for a total of \$96,800. In 2023 we had received 38 pledges for a total of \$101,870. We need your help. If you haven't yet made a pledge, please do so as soon as possible. Pledge cards are available in the office or from Caryl Allan, our Financial Secretary. We need to project our estimated operating revenue so we can prepare a realistic budget for 2025.

### **ADULT LEARNING**

I was invited to give the message last Sunday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. I chose the topic of Contemplative Prayer since this is one of Pastor Torri's four themes she is considering on her sabbatical. I first learned of Contemplative Prayer and Lectio Divina while taking a spiritual direction course at St. Scholastica in Duluth.

Contemplative Prayer has been described as opening your mind and heart, your whole being, to God the ultimate mystery. We open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself. In Lectio Divina, we invite participants to drop down from our minds into our hearts and listen with the "ear of your heart." I closed the message with a poem I wrote some years ago that I invite you to read slowly and contemplatively. Feel free to reach out if you are interested in learning more about the contemplative way.

- Linnea Dietrich

### To the Divine Within

Who are you? Where are you?

Sometimes you come in a sunset to wash us in sublime beauty.

Sometimes you come in a fresh cool breeze to caress our skin.

Sometimes you come in a violent wind to awaken our senses.

Sometimes you come in a dark star-filled night to remind us of deep mystery.

Sometimes you come in another's physical touch to bring us your love.

Who are you? Where are you?

You, Oh Divine Lover, are in our innermost being.
You are wholeness and love itself.

Help me to remember... that you know me and I am enough.

### ONGOING EVENTS



### Women's Fellowship

Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm Election of Officers & Making Gift Bags

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



### Northwoods Acoustic Jam

Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm In the Friendship Hall

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

### **NOVEMBER FUNDRAISING MEAL**



Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Friendship Hall

Our Monthly Fundraising Meals continue! Each 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday come enjoy a yummy fresh-made meal

in support of a local nonprofit. Free-will donations help support a different local area nonprofit each month.

Free-will donation.

Menu: Spaghetti, salad, dessert to benefit Paws & Claws Rescue and Resort.

### STAINED GLASS PAW ORNAMENTS

Nada Fisher (who is often our liturgist, or in the kitchen, and volunteers at Paws & Claws) does fabulous stained glass work. She has made wonderful paw-shaped ornaments / suncatchers which are for sale at Paws & Claws, and she will be bringing several of them to the Fundraising Dinner in November to benefit Paws & Claws, for a \$20 suggested donation. We have a lot of dog lovers in this community. They make wonderful Christmas gifts! Let's show our support!

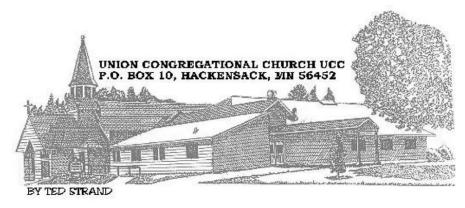


# Union Congregational Church, UCC, Hackensack MN

## November 2024

Community event

2 SATURDAY	a	91	23	30
1 FRIDAY First Day of American Indian Heritage Month Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders*	8 Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders*	15 Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders*	Office Closed 1:30 pm Bone Builders*	29 Native American Heritage Day
THURSDAY	7 7:30 pm Justice Ministry Team Zoom Meeting	14 1:00 pm Women's Fellowship	21 1:00-3:00 pm Council Meeting	28 Thanksgiving Office Closed
WEDNESDAY	6 10:00 am Fit2Move 4:00 pm Lectio Divina	13 10:00 am Fit2Move 4:00 pm Lectio Divina	10:00 am Fit2Move 10:00 pm Lectio Divina 5:00-6:00 pm Fundraiser Meal 5:30-7:00 pm Northwoods Acoustic Jam	27 10:00 am Fit2Move 4:00 pm Lectio Divina
TUESDAY	5 Election Day 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	9:00 am Tech Team Meeting	26 9:00 am Tech Team Meeting
MONDAY	4 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	18 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*	25 1:30 pm Bone Builders* 6:00 pm AA Open Meeting*
SUNDAY	2 Daylight Saving Time Ends 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	10 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 11:00 am Worship Ministry Team Meeting 1:00 pm Birchview Church	9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church	24 9:30 am Worship Service 10:30 am Coffee Hour 1:00 pm Birchview Church



### FORWARD SERVICE REQUESTED

### I feel a chill coming in... Warm apple cider, anyone?

