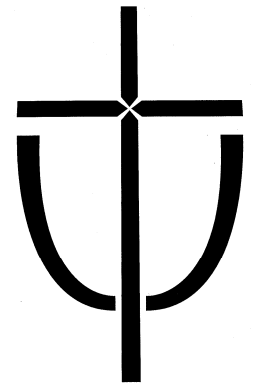


STILL SPEAKING



Indeed, the word of God is living and active...

-Hebrews 4:12

The Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of His Holy Word.

-John Robinson

FEBRUARY 2012

THE INSIDE SCOOP

Newsletter Deadline

*Our next newsletter will be published
the week of February 29, 2012.*

*The deadline for that newsletter is
Friday, February 24, 2012.*

Prayer and Taizé Worship-----	3
Lent Begins-----	3
Lenten Clusters Begin-----	3
Safe Sanctuary Workshop-----	3
Our Church Family -----	4
Union Goes Green -----	4
Outreach News -----	5
Our Attendance -----	5
Second Sunday Series -----	5
Senior Moments-----	5
JOSHUA News -----	6
Calling New Members - back page	

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

What is it that lifts our hearts? What is it that stretches us beyond ourselves? What is it that connects us with God and with one another in a spiritual way that makes the more practical and conflicted ways we connect seem petty and rude?

What I do know is that that doesn't happen rationally or mechanically. Instead, we come closer with expression and emotion than we do with information and reason. It's why Jesus told parables; three-dimensional stories that cannot, finally, be reduced to points, or positions, or ideas. It's why we illuminate our worship spaces with stained glass, and why stained glass will never be replaced by a digitally animated projection screen. It's why we still use candles in the age of electric lights. It's why the majesty of a pipe organ speaks to the soul in a way that cannot be imitated or replicated by even the most advanced electronics.

This Lent, we will be blessed by an opportunity each Wednesday evening at 7:16 p.m. in the Bagby Chapel to do just that. With the leadership of the Worship Ministry and the dedicated work of Ruth E. Baker, we will gather to worship on these Wednesday evenings in the manner of Taizé. Taizé is an ecumenical community in France that has given its contemplative, introspective worship to the world. The service is very simple, but lavish with light from candles and rich with music. Taizé worship believes the words that Aldous Huxley wrote:

*After silence, that which comes nearest
to expressing the inexpressible is music.*

Please do join us on the five Wednesdays in Lent, beginning on Wednesday, February 29 through Wednesday, March 28. I know we will be blessed and graced by this beautiful time of worship together!

At our annual meeting on January 29, the congregation approved the installation of a cross that will crown the east gable (above the main sanctuary door) of our church building. Contributions for the cross have been quietly coming to the church for years and now equal the cost of the project. Gifts have been made in memory of loved ones, in celebration of significant life events, and simply by people who have been moved by the possibility of adding a cross to the exterior of our church building. In the discussion preceding the vote, a church member asked, *Why a cross, and why now?*

The cross is the central symbol of the Christian faith and does not belong to a particular tradition (Roman Catholic, Lutheran) alone. It has been stylized in many ways, including the Jerusalem Cross, the Budding Cross, the Celtic Cross, the Crucifix and, yes, even the swastika. The cross that will be installed at Union Church was designed by Todd Kane. It is an equilateral cross that will well compliment the English gothic style of our church building. But what does the cross represent? The Jerusalem Cross represents the Great Commission from Matthew in which Jesus commanded the disciples to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. The Budding Cross emphasizes the resurrection and represents the growth of the Christian faith (the cross on our altar is a version of the budding cross). The ring of the Celtic Cross represents the eternity of God's love. The Crucifix emphasizes the suffering and death of Jesus. And the ancient swastika has become synonymous for Nazism. In modern times, some have said that the cross should not be used by Christians because it represents child abuse – God submitting Jesus to death. Because it is a symbol, it means many things to many people. For me, the cross represents the unfathomable love of God and the unqualified commitment of our God to love us.

In the severe Calvinism that is a part of our theological heritage, crosses were rejected

because of the fear that any symbol could be a graven image for us and thus idolatrous. However, this church let go of that notion over 80 years ago when an edifice was erected that was resplendent with stained glass, carved and painted symbols, a magnificent pipe organ, and many crosses in the sanctuary.

That's the *why* part of the answer. The other question is, *why now?* For me, the answer is our changing culture. The church is not the respected and revered institution it once was. We simply can't assume that everybody in our society is Christian, or that they want to be! It is a new day and, in this new day, we need to do new things to witness to our faith. My prayer is that the cross will help us to do that...to focus more intentionally on Christ Jesus and to witness to Him more visibly to those beyond our fellowship. To paraphrase the Purpose Statement that was reported at the annual meeting, *our work is to follow Jesus by being the voices through which Christ is still speaking...by being the hands through which Christ is still working... and by being the hearts through which Christ is still loving.*

United Church of Christ pastor Dr. Purd Dietz – a professor at Central Seminary in Cleveland and then at Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis – wrote the words to *We Would be Building*: one of the great hymns of the 20th Century. Here's the first verse, from the *New Century Hymnal*:

*We would be building; temples still undone
o'er crumbling walls their crosses scarcely lift,
waiting 'til love can raise the broken stone,
and hearts creative bridge the human rift.
We would be building, Architect Divine,
reveal the shape of life in Your design.*

May those words inform and inspire the cross we lift. See you in church!

Chuck Mize

Lent Begins on Ash Wednesday

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22, as we worship together at Union Church in the sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. This introspective and meaningful service offers us the possibility to renew our dedication to the way of Jesus, as it leads us to the agony of the cross, and then to the joy of the empty tomb. We will receive ashes that represent our old lives and God's gracious promise of forgiveness and new life. Won't you join us?

Lenten Clusters Begin

Each Lent we have the opportunity to gather in the homes of fellow church members, enjoy each other's company and a potluck meal together, and engage in a faith conversation that's focused by a book we read together. This year, we will also be getting to know our friend Tony Robinson better as we read his book, **Common Grace: How to be a Person and Other Spiritual Matters**. Our first gathering will be on Sunday, February 26 at 5:00 p.m. in Harmony Hall. Bring a dish to share and join us! We will meet each Sunday evening in Lent, concluding on Palm Sunday, April 1. Please sign up at Union Central!

Worship News Prayer and Taizé Worship

The Worship Ministry will offer many opportunities for those at Union to enhance their prayer life. On two evenings in February, Lou Norsetter will offer a workshop on *Prayers to Go*. The first evening we will contemplate prayers for ourselves. The second night we will develop prayers for ourselves and others. The workshop will occur on Wednesday evenings, February 15 and 22. The room will be announced later. We will begin at 6:15 p.m. on the 15th and finish in time for "7:16 @ 716." On Ash Wednesday, February 22, we will begin at 6:00 p.m. and finish in time for worship at 7 p.m. Sign up at Union Central.

Beginning Wednesday, February 29, Union will offer Taizé services at 7:16 p.m. in the Bagby Chapel (30-minute duration). Ruth E. Baker drew on her talents and experiences to develop five services for us. The services will continue for the five Wednesdays of Lent. We invite the congregation to take part in one or all of the Taizé services at Union. We will provide bulletins to guide you through the service.

In Green Bay, we are most familiar with the Taizé services at St. Norbert Abbey. Sometimes we mistakenly attribute Taizé as only a Catholic form of worship. Actually a Protestant – Brother Roger Schutz – organized the first services in Taizé, France in 1940. It quickly grew into an ecumenical effort including Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions.

—Lou Norsetter

Children and Youth Leaders, Teachers and Helpers

The Safe Sanctuary and Christian Education Workshop is scheduled for **Sunday, Feb. 12 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in Pilgrim Hall**. This workshop will be led by Jan Davis and is for all those currently working with Union's children and youth and for all those hoping to do so in the future!

—Diane Tugel

Sunday, February 12, 2012
2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Pilgrim Hall

Our Church Family

Union Goes Green



Union Family: Thanks for using our washable mugs which is helping us reduce our landfill waste!

There are several types of recycling materials including "post-consumer waste" and "pre-consumer waste." Pre-consumer waste is the reintroduction of manufacturing scrap (such as trimmings from paper production, defective aluminum cans, etc.) back into the manufacturing process. Pre-consumer waste is easy to collect and commonly used in manufacturing industries.

Once material or finished product has served its intended consumer use (paper cups, dead batteries, plastic packaging), it is considered post-consumer waste. This waste is harder to collect, but the portion that is diverted or recovered from waste destined for disposal can be reused in the manufacturing process, saving production materials (trees, oil) and removing tons of materials from our landfills.

The Treehugger organization explains it this way: "For example, to show its compliance, an outfit like McDonald's may say its Big Mac cartons are '40% recycled paper (15% post-consumer),' the 15 percent referring to the old newspapers and the like that you contributed to your local recycling program. By insisting on packaging with high post-consumer recycled content, you'll be helping to increase the market for old newsprint and other tough-to-recycle stuff, possibly saving a few trees and certainly making the manager of your town's recycling program a lot happier." So watch for the words "post-consumer waste recycling" on articles you purchase.

Monthly Recycle Item

The monthly recycle item will change every month or so. We are still collecting *packing peanuts*. Put them in a plastic bag and tie a knot so they don't tumble out! Bring them to the church coat room (across from the church office) and look for the area labeled "Monthly Recycle Item." In future months, we will be recycling *bubble wrap and plastic bags*.

Energy Tip:

Vampire power is energy expended by home electronics when not in use. The American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy calculates that vampires are sucking the lifeblood of the equivalent of five nuclear power plants. The biggest energy wasters are audio equipment, DVD players, cell phone chargers plugged in when not in use and cordless phones. Consider plugging such equipment into a power strip that can turn off all of the items with one touch.

Resource: www.energystar.gov

Source: the EcoQuiz Deck Knowledge Cards

Outreach News

The help and good humor of a growing group that cooks and serves at St. John’s Homeless Shelter is much appreciated! The most recent newsletter put out by the shelter is chock full of gratitude – partly for meals, clothing and shelter, unexpected Christmas gifts – but most importantly, in the words of one guest, *“It’s nice to know that people think you’re actually a person and you matter.”*

As cooks and servers, we are part of larger community group that brings that kind of spirit to the shelter. Thank you to the St. John’s Board of Trustees who, when establishing the shelter’s mission, made relationship building a priority for the shelter.

The Outreach Ministry will roll out a new project on Sunday, February 5, that also captures the sense of the “Christ Spirit” affirmed in our Bond of Union. We will be asking the congregation to supply some very specific food items that just fit into a nice presentation box. These “Christ Spirit” boxes will be given to homeless families temporarily housed in local motels through the Supporting Our Families Together (SOFT) program. Some of you will be familiar with this project that Pat Shafer inaugurated during the all-church retreat in the fall. The project will wrap up by the month’s end with a hoped for 18 completed boxes.

—Cathy Putman

Our Attendance

January	<u>This Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
First Sunday	55	138
	New Year’s Day	
Second Sunday	218 (6 at 7:16)	212
Third Sunday	174 (10 at 7:16)	167
	Martin Luther King Sunday	Martin Luther King Sunday
Fourth Sunday	152	189
		175th Anniversary Service
Fifth Sunday	169 (3 at 7:16)	165
	Annual Meeting	Annual Meeting
Weekly Total	787	871
Weekly Average	157	174

Second Sunday Series

Join us at 9 a.m. on February 12 in the Bagby Chapel for our Second Sunday Series. Kitty and Phil Hauck will talk about how Southeast Asia has changed since the Vietnam War era.

Senior Moments

Join us for a Senior Moments session on February 19 at 9 a.m. in the Chapel Classroom. The topic will be “Health Care in America: Today and Tomorrow” John Shier and Phil Hauck will lead the discussion.

Altar Flowers



Please consider providing flowers for the altar in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event. Below are dates available for you to provide flowers:

All of February and March

Please call the church office at 437-9266 or sign up on the board next to the office if you would like to provide altar flowers for one of these Sundays. Thank you.

JOSHUA In Action

(Justice Organization Sharing Hope and United for Action)

JOSHUA is an ecumenical coalition of 17 faith-based communities in Brown County and is part of WISDOM, a statewide organization of more than 125 member congregations.



J O S H U A

11 x 15 Campaign

JOSHUA is one of several organizations statewide working with churches to bring new directions to public policy. A new initiative for the interfaith coalition, called the 11 x 15 Campaign, concerns the expensive failure of Wisconsin's current prison policy. Our state has more than 22,000 persons incarcerated, more than twice the number of Minnesota despite similar populations.

The purpose of this campaign is to urge elected officials to revise sentencing and offer treatment programs, particularly for nonviolent drug offenders. It is expected that such a change will cut Wisconsin's incarcerated population in half, and that this change can occur by the end of 2015. This policy change would result in a significant reduction to the \$1.3 billion spent in the most recent (2010-11) budgetary year. For comparison, Minnesota spent \$465 million in the same year.

There are deeper reasons why JOSHUA endorses this campaign, reasons related to racial and class injustice. Over half of Wisconsin's prison population is African American; only 6% of Wisconsin's population is African American. The preponderance of black men in prison is not an issue just in Wisconsin as legal expert Michelle Alexander documents in her book, The New Jim Crow, soon to be on the shelves in the church library. But in Wisconsin, many black men are convicted for drug offences while those same illegal drug activities go unprosecuted in more upscale neighborhoods. Prison time erects far reaching barriers for ex-offenders, limiting access to housing, to jobs, and to a driver's license for one year, functioning as a de facto color and class barrier. JOSHUA believes that through the 11 x 15 Campaign Wisconsin can mete out truer justice.

JOSHUA will seek signatures of Union Church members who support this effort and welcomes anyone who would like to learn about the issue. The campaign officially starts at 10 a.m. on February 21 at the Brown County Courthouse.

Transit/Transportation Forum

On Thursday, February 9, JOSHUA's Economic Justice Committee will hold a forum at First United Presbyterian Church in De Pere. Because Transportation Authorization is expected to pass this year in Congress, we are eager to understand people's views of the new Green Bay Metro route changes and other hot button issues such as infrastructure, bike paths, walkable streets and intercity transit since all these items are part of the bill. Information about these opinions will be shared at the February Brown County 20/20: Envisioning the Future Conference.

As a result of the 1,000 petitions JOSHUA and Fox Valley's Appleton group ESTHER presented to Congressmen Reid Ribble and Tom Petri in November, the two introduced a bill asking for flexibility in the spending of the transportation funding that comes to systems like Green Bay Metro. Ribble and Petri, citing constituent concerns, proposed that monies could be spent on operations as well as equipment, a flexibility that does not exist in the current law.

—Cathy Putman

Priscilla Circle Tuesday, February 28

Members of Priscilla Circle will meet in the English Room on Tuesday, Feb. 28 at 1 p.m. Helen Krueger will be your hostess.

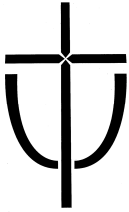
February 6 to March 11, 2012

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

8:00 a.m. Handbell Rehearsal 10:00 a.m. Worship
9:00 a.m. Church School

Fellowship and refreshments following Worship; Nursery care provided: 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT/SUN
6	1 p.m. Bible Study 5:15 p.m. Education & New Member Ministries 5:30 p.m. Inreach, Outreach & Worship Ministries 6:30 p.m. All Ministries Meet 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	7 8 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship "7:16 at 716"	9 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	10	11 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Common Ministry Orientation (Chapel Classroom) 12 9:00 a.m. Second Sunday Series Phil and Kitty Hauck
13	14 1 p.m. Bible Study 5:30 p.m. Stewardship Ministry 6:00 p.m. Adult GSA 6:30 p.m. Common Ministry 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	15 1:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship 6:15 p.m. Prayer Shawl "7:16 at 716"	16 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	17	18 19 9:00 a.m. Senior Moments John Shier & Phil Hauck
20	21 1 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	22 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service	23 9:00 a.m. Souper Cooks at NEW Shelter 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	24	25 26 5:00 p.m. Lenten Clusters in Harmony Hall
27	28 1 p.m. Bible Study 1 p.m. Priscilla Circle 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	29 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship 7:16 p.m. Taizé Worship Service	1 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	2	3 4 After worship Union Goes Green 5:00 p.m. Lenten Clusters In the homes of the participants
5	6 1 p.m. Bible Study 5:15 p.m. Education & New Member Ministries 5:30 p.m. Inreach, Outreach & Worship Ministries 6:30 p.m. All Ministries Meet 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	7 7:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast Group 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship 7:16 p.m. Taizé Worship Service	8 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	9	10 11 9:00 a.m. Second Sunday Series Barbara McClure-Lukens and Michael Lukens 5:00 p.m. Lenten Clusters In the homes of the participants



Union Congregational
United Church of Christ
716 S. Madison Street
Green Bay, WI 54301

Address Service Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

PERMIT NO. 53
GREEN BAY, WI

Calling New Members



On Palm Sunday, April 1, we will receive new members into the faith and fellowship of Union Church. Prior to that Sunday, two Inquirers Classes will be held to introduce persons interested in membership at Union to who we are and what we believe – as Christians, as the United Church of Christ, and as a part of Union Church. The first gathering will be held on Thursday, March 15 in the English Room at 7:00 p.m. We will conclude by 8:30 p.m. The second gathering will be held on Wednesday, March 21 at 5:40 p.m. We will meet in the English Room and then move to Pilgrim Hall where we will enjoy an evening meal with the participants in the Wednesday evening youth activities at Union Church. We will conclude by 8:00 p.m.

For further information to sign up or to request child care, please call the Church Office at 437-9266 or by email at office@unionucc.com.

Union Congregational United Church of Christ

716 S. Madison Street
Green Bay, WI 54301
e-mail: office@unionucc.com
(920) 437-9266
Fax: (920) 437-3765

Charles E. Mize
Senior Minister

Diane L. Tugel
Interim Education
and Program Coordinator

Jerry L. Kuehn
Interim Pastoral Assistant

Barbara McClure-Lukens
Moderator

Church Office Hours
Mon.-Fri. 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

For more information about us,
visit our web page
at <http://www.unionucc.com>