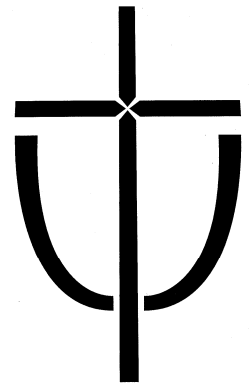


STILL SPEAKING



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

JANUARY 2012

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

What a remarkable Christmastide we have enjoyed together at Union Church! Under the direction of **Inky Meng and Deb Rose**, the magical Christmas Pageant on December 18 was blessed by the leadership of many of our members and involved so many more as participants. After the pageant, one of you commented to me that it was especially sincere and sweet this year. With stories and songs, the early Christmas Eve service gave particular focus to our younger friends as we learned more about St. Nicholas and the animals at the manger as **Larry and Deb Rose** read stories. **Ruth E. Baker and Ray Thompson** offered a wonderful organ/piano duet arrangement of *Joy to the World* and **Julia Delvaux** sang *O Holy Night* with tremendous feeling and sensitivity. The late Christmas Eve service was blessed by the glory of our magnificent choir. It began with music that included **Gwen Noonan's** solo, *The Little Road to Bethlehem* and **Rita Baretta's and Gwen Noonan's** duet arrangement of *The First Noel* set to Pachelbel's *Canon in D* with four-hand piano accompaniment by **Ruth E. Baker and Ray Thompson**. Then, during the service, **Courtney Sherman** captured the mystery and the majesty of the birth of our Savior as she sang *O Holy Night*. On Christmas Day, **Rita Baretta** enriched our worship with her solo, *I Wonder as I Wander* and, on New Year's Day, **Susan Blihar** offered her moving rendition of *Sweet Little Jesus Boy*. Then, on Epiphany Sunday, **Jessie Streed and Ray Thompson** inspired us with **Michael Rosewall's** piano and saxophone arrangement of *Go, Tell it on the Mountain* and our choir offered Healey Willan's sublime arrangement of *What is this Lovely Fragrance?*

What amazing gifts so many of you have given in inspiring witness to our Lord Jesus! Our attendance on both Christmas Eve and Epiphany Sunday was as large as it has been in recent years. But, more significantly, many of you have commented on the wonderful spirit we have felt and experienced through this holy season. I have felt that, too. I felt it most profoundly on Epiphany Sunday during the processional hymn. Seeing **Emmaline Weist** carrying the star with such dignity up the aisle...seeing our lovable camel (**Katelyn Leiden** and **Megan Danen**) follow the star and lead our royalty...and seeing our kings (queens this year: **Kathy Baldwin, Judy Larmouth** and **Barbara McClure-Lukens**) lay their gifts at the altar was tremendously moving for me. Epiphany means *descent of light*. It celebrates the coming of the light of Christ into the world as the world is symbolized by the three kings. What would it mean if the great worldly powers all saw the light of God's love? What would it mean if the great worldly powers all bowed their knees to the law of love that is human among us in Jesus?

In my view, the great gift and challenge for 2012 is the way we respond to God's love in the shape we give to our mission and ministry as a congregation.

THE INSIDE SCOOP

Newsletter Deadline

Our next newsletter will be published the week of Feb. 1, 2012. The deadline for that newsletter is Friday, Jan. 27, 2012.

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Our Purpose Discernment process will be a great help as we do that...as we move forward into the future of God's grace. In that process, my hope is that our foundation and vision will both find their focus in Jesus...in the living Christ...in the humanity of God's love that redeems and sanctifies our own humanity when we become His disciples...when we follow Him.

In its work, the Purpose Discernment Team has determined that our Bond of Union continues to speak profoundly of who we are and who we must be. To that covenant they have offered a prologue phrase that I think is particularly apt: ***Giving our all as we have been given all...*** What a wonderful realization of humble gratitude and abundant grace! For me it is reminiscent of Grace Noel Crowell's beloved hymn, ***Because I Have Been Given Much, I, Too, Must Give***. Here's the Bond of Union, with its introductory statement:

Giving our all as we have been given all...

We accept the religion of love and service which Jesus lived and taught, and declare it our purpose to strive to do the will of God, and to make the Christ Spirit dominant in our lives and in all human relations.

Giving our all as we have been given all: I can't think of a more succinct, challenging or faithful description of the Christian life. May we grow in our giving all as we receive our all in Jesus. See you in church.

Chuck Mize



Outreach News

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING provided relief after Turkey's 7.2 magnitude earthquake in October 2011 affected 200,000 people.

- The One Great Hour of Sharing denominational offering will be collected on Sunday, March 18. This is the first of three outreach collections that the church takes each year. One Great Hour funds are used to assist in global and national disasters and emergencies and for refugee relief.
- The Outreach Ministry will roll out an in-kind effort to help local homeless families in February. Watch for details!
- It is not too late to contribute to the Christmas Fund which responds to healthcare and other financial needs of retired clergy and lay workers. Send your contributions to the church office marked Christmas Fund.

ST. JOHN'S COOKING

- High numbers of persons staying at St. John's Shelter have increased the need for supplementary meals.
- To respond, Union will be making soup on Tuesday, January 17, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the church kitchen. No need to be there the whole time. Sign up at Union Central.
- We will be freezing the soup so large plastic ice cream containers or dairy containers that will hold 32 ounces or more are needed. Turn in at the church office or in the kitchen by January 17. Thanks.
- Just to be clear, we will not be serving that evening.

More info? Contact Cathy Putman, 435-1540 or cputman@new.rr.com.

JOSHUA NEWS

At least two Union members will have become Special Registration Deputies for the city of Green Bay as part of the work that the JOHSUA Voter ID committee has undertaken to ensure access to voting under the new Wisconsin legislation, which will be in force for the February primary and all other elections in 2012. The first outreach location will be St. John the Evangelist Shelter in keeping with the group's focus on homeless voters. For more information about this work, please contact Charlotte Goska, cgoska@yahoo.com or 621-6665.

Annual Meeting and Potluck

The 176th annual meeting of Union Congregational United Church of Christ will convene in the sanctuary on Sunday, January 29 immediately following worship in the sanctuary. Reports concerning the ministry of Union Church in 2011 will be presented, outgoing Ministry Chairs and Vice-Chairs will be recognized, elections will be held for new leaders in our Ministry structure, and a budget for the ministry of Union Church in 2012 will be adopted.

At the conclusion of the meeting we will move to Pilgrim Hall where we will enjoy a delicious potluck meal together. Please bring a salad, vegetable, casserole or dessert for the common table. The Common Ministry will provide the meat, drinks and table service.

Please sign up at Union Central. Join us on the 29th!

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:

January and February

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.

The Cost and Joy of Discipleship

Our financial commitment campaign for Union Church in 2012 continues to grow, as does the challenge to raise our pledges to a level that meets the financial need for the mission and ministries of our congregation this year. Our goal is to support a proposed budget for 2012 that includes, at this time, one pastor. As our Purpose Discernment process unfolds in the coming months, we will consider various staffing options that we think will best support and advance our ministries. At that time, we will also develop a financial plan to fund our proposed staffing. With this plan, our current pledge need is \$450,000. As of this writing, we have 128 pledges, totaling \$335,200.

If you have not yet made your pledge, please do so today! You may do that through a pledge card (available at the church office), by calling your pledge in to the church office (437-9266), or by emailing your pledge to the church office at office@unionucc.com. Thank you for your support of the ministry that we share...and for joining us in sharing *The Cost and Joy of Discipleship!*

—Chuck Mize

Union's Children and Youth Education

Starting Sunday January 8
and running every Sunday until Summer!

9:00 a.m. Church School

Nursery – infants through 3 years old
4 year olds through 2nd grade – Lower Level Classroom
3rd through 5th grade – Upstairs Fellowship Classroom
Middle School – YCA room
High School – Pilgrim Hall

10:00 a.m. Children's Time

Nursery – infants through 3 years old
4 year olds through 2nd grade – Lower Level Classroom
(after Children's Moments in Worship)

Church Angels



Would you like to be a Church Angel? We have one busy Church Angel already, and several more willing to get to work.

Church Angels will meet in Pilgrim Hall on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:15 p.m. Come early at 5:45 p.m. and have dinner together if you would like. Our tasks at hand for our first gathering on Wednesday, February 1 will be sharpening pew pocket pencils, and revamping the name tags.

We need your help! Come and join us. **Sign up at Union Central** to be a Church Angel.

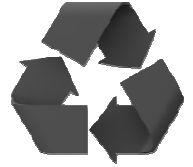
Costumes Needed

The Christmas Pageant Committee is looking for overgrown animal Halloween costumes. Also, fabric and trim is greatly appreciated.

If you have any of these items, please bring them to the church office. Thank you!

—Inky Meng

Union Goes Green



Monthly Recycle Item

Styrofoam Packing Peanuts

The monthly recycle item will change every month or two. In January and February, we will be collecting packing peanuts. Put them in a plastic bag and tie a knot so they don't tumble out and make a mess! Bring them to the church coat room (across from the church office) and look for the area labeled "Monthly Recycle Item." Deposit the items in that box, and they will be taken care of. In future months, we will be recycling bubble wrap and plastic bags.

If you missed the used battery collection, be aware that you may take your used batteries to the Brown County Household Hazardous Waste Center and they will take them without a charge to you. Their hours are: Thursdays – noon to 6 p.m. and Saturdays – 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Energy Tip:

How much energy could have been saved by recycling all of the nation's aluminum cans?

The nearly 50 billion cans thrown away each year could save enough energy to power 1.3 million American homes if they had been recycled. Each can wastes as much energy as pouring out half a can of gasoline. It takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than to make it in the first place (which is very energy intensive). So recycle all aluminum cans you do use, but even better is reducing consumption altogether which could have health benefits as well, since most cans contain soft drinks or beer.

– Sierra Club EcoQuiz Deck

Our Attendance

December	<u>This Year</u>	<u>Last Year</u>
First Sunday	169 (18 at 7:16) Heifer Market	162 Packers home game
Second Sunday	181 (7 at 7:16)	Church cancelled - blizzard!
Third Sunday	278 Christmas Pageant	338 Christmas Pageant & Heifer Market
Fourth Sunday	62 Christmas Day	85
Weekly Total	715	585
Weekly Average	179	195
Christmas Eve	359	357
Early	117	125
Late	242	232

EPH News

Jubilee Renovation

Jubilee House had a big water problem in the bathroom. Several years ago, a shower was installed in the bathtub. However, the original design for the bathroom included a curved ceiling over the tub which made it impossible for a curtain to keep the water from splashing out of the shower area. As a result, the floor was always wet and waterlogged, the vanity was water damaged, anything metal was rusted, and there was mold on the walls.

It was clearly an unhealthy place and something had to be done. We decided to move the family out of the house for seven days and renovate the bathroom. We started by removing the toilet and vanity, and the plaster from the walls around the tub. Then we pulled the cast iron tub out in one piece. The north wall was also taken down to the studs. We then removed the flooring, all five layers! The new bathtub and surround were installed by Garot Plumbing. We put the room back together with a new waterproof floor, new vanity and sink, and a donated toilet. After the room was painted and new trim installed, we were finished just in time for the family to return.

As a result of this work, the family that occupies Jubilee House has a safe, healthy bathroom. I would like to thank the volunteers who made it possible to complete this work on time. I would especially like to thank Duane Howell who worked every day. Also thanks go to Union Church for providing most of the needed funds for the project.

—Jeff Carels

Helpers Needed

We are looking for a few good Union people to be helpers for our Church School teachers on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. Helpers are needed to assist so there is no preparation and you would be helping on a rotating basis so you would not be needed every Sunday; however, you are definitely needed! Please consider stepping into this wonderful role.

We are also looking for a few more good Union people to provide care for our 4 year olds through 2nd graders after the Children's Moment in worship at 10:00 a.m. After the Children's Moment, the children leave the sanctuary and gather in the lower level classroom for activities. There is currently a team in place that provides adult leadership during this time; however, more adults are needed. Please consider joining this team.

Contact Diane Tugel (email dianetugel@gmail.com or phone 412-8534) for further information.

Senior Moments

Join us for a Senior Moments session on January 15 at 9 a.m. in the Chapel Classroom. The topic will be "Taxing Moments for Seniors – Income Tax in a Nutshell." Larry Rose will be the speaker.

Second Sunday Series

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

Thank You

A big "thank you" to everyone who contributed to Pilgrim Fellowship's pie sale in November, from parents that supplied their middle schoolers with ingredients to everyone who purchased a pie. A very special thank you to Annie Ericksen for assisting us with the baking and cleaning! Your contributions helped us raise \$220. This money greatly helped us in providing a family of three with Christmas presents through Salvation Army's Adopt-A-Family program.

—PF Youth Group

Our Church Family

January 16 to February 12, 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
16 6:30 p.m. Pastoral Relations	17 1:00 p.m. Bible Study 1:00 p.m. Cooking for St. John's 5:30 p.m. Stewardship Ministry 6:30 p.m. Common Ministry 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	18 1:00 p.m. Prayer Shawl NO YOUTH ACTIVITIES 6:15 p.m. Prayer Shawl	19 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	20	21
					22 After worship JOSHUA Union's Core Team meets
23	24 1 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	25 9:00 a.m. Souper Cooks at NEW Shelter 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship "7:16 at 716"	26 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	27	28
					29 176th Annual Meeting after worship; Potluck following in Pilgrim Hall
30	31 1 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	1 7:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast Group 5:45 p.m. Dinner 6:15 p.m. Youth Fellowship "7:16 at 716"	2 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir	3	4
					5
6	7 1 p.m. Bible Study 5:15 p.m. Education Ministry 5:30 p.m. Inreach, New Member, Outreach & Worship Ministries 6:00 p.m. Adult GSA 6:30 p.m. Band Rehearsal	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
					12

