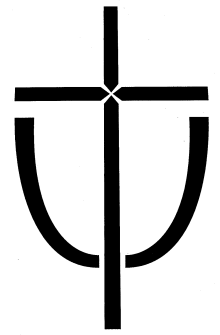


Still Speaking



Indeed, the word of God is living and active...
-Hebrews 4:12

November 2021

The Inside Scoop

Newsletter Deadline

*Our next newsletter
will be published the week
of December 15, 2021.*

*The deadline for that newsletter
is Friday, December 10, 2021.*

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Thanksgiving: The Antidote to Pride and Despair

The smell of turkey roasting in the oven. Polishing grandma's crystal and the silver that has been passed down for generations. Anxiously awaiting the arrival of a loved one who has been away for far too long.

It's no wonder that so many people say that Thanksgiving is their favorite holiday. At least for now, it's less commercialized than many holidays. In my experience, people have fewer expectations of Thanksgiving than they do of Christmas or even New Year's.

And, on paper, it's secular; Thanksgiving is a national holiday, not a church holiday.

But, as we approach this holiday that has come to be known for excess and indulgence, I invite you to look at it through a lens of faith.

Giving thanks is at the core of Christianity, and many other faith traditions.

To quote the great UCC scripture scholar, Walter Brueggemann, "For all its entanglement with white violence against Native Americans, Thanksgiving Day is a reminder to us that even in such a difficult time as this, gratitude is the hallmark of the Christian life. It is an acknowledgement that we are on the receiving end of life, and it is the generous creator God who is on the giving end of our life."

Giving thanks, Brueggemann goes on to suggest, wards off two of the pitfalls of modern life - pride and despair.

Offering thanks wards off pride in that it helps us to remember that we are not the source of our goodness and blessing. When we engage in pride, we "imagine that our worldly success is our achievement, and therefore our possession and at our disposal for our own uses...This leads some to imagine self-sufficiency that leads in turn to greed and eventually to predatory violence toward those who threaten our guarded surplus."

(continued on page 2)

Lectionary Readings**November 21****Reign of Christ**

2 Samuel 23:1-7 and

Psalm 132:1-12, (13-18)

Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14 and Psalm 93

Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

November 25**Thanksgiving Day**

Joel 2:21-27 and Psalm 126

1 Timothy 2:1-7

and Matthew 6:25-33

November 28**1st Sunday of Advent**

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

December 5**2nd Sunday of Advent**

Baruch 5:1-9 or Malachi 3:1-4

Luke 1:68-79

Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

December 12**3rd Sunday of Advent**

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6

Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18

December 19**4th Sunday of Advent**

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55 or

Psalm 80:1-7

Hebrews 10:5-10;

Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

December 24**Christmas Eve**

Isaiah 62:6-12; Psalm 97

Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

December 25**Christmas Day**

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

(continued from page 1)

Conversely, offering thanks wards off despair in that it recognizes that even in the toughest of contexts, we are still blessed. Pausing to give thanks draws us out of our immediate struggle and back into an awareness of the gifts all around us.

Brueggemann goes on, "Thus, gratitude is a form of vigorous resistance against the seductions of the transactional world, empowering us to live apart from both pride and despair, apart from the toxic ideologies that beset our economy. Gratitude is the disciplined affirmation that the temptations of pride and despair are null and void and have no power over us."

In a world too often colored by greed, a world in which might too often makes right, and freedom has become untethered from responsibility, giving thanks is subversive.

It says, "I'm not the source and summit of all that is." It says, "There is beauty and goodness all around, and I acknowledge it."

And, within a Christian context, it acknowledges that we all, friend and neighbor, stranger and family, are recipients of the bounteous gifts of our creator.

So this year, your assignment should you choose to accept it, is to be thankful, but also to reflect on how giving thanks is an act of faith, how expressing gratitude pulls us away from pride and despair, and back to God this Thanksgiving.

Pastor Bridget Flad Daniels

P.S. Additionally, if at all possible, cast your nets wide this holiday season, bringing everyone into the loving arms of God. Holidays can be a delightful time with family and friends, and they can be wildly isolating. My prayer is that the people of our congregation will do everything in our power to make sure everyone gets an extra helping of love, belonging, and grace this holiday season.

Our Attendance

October	*2021	2019
1st Sunday	67	132
2nd Sunday	67	120
3rd Sunday	54	120
4th Sunday	50	129
5th Sunday	73	--
Totals	311	626
Average	62.2	125.3

* Attendance figures for 2021 do not include numbers for those who streamed our worship services online.

Christmas Pageant Recording Saturday, November 20

All children and youth of Union members and friends are invited to gather in the church courtyard at **9 a.m. on Saturday, November 20** to record the shepherds, animals, and angels scene for the Christmas Pageant. Costuming will begin at 9 a.m. and recording will begin at 10. Children who want to wear their own shepherd, animal, or angel costume can arrive closer to 10. Our bad weather date will be Saturday, December 4 at the same times.

Pandemic Canvas Project

We will have a Zoom Adult Ed Session on Sunday, November 21 from 8:45 to 9:35 a.m. in which we will share pictures of the combined installation of the canvases, as well as photos of individual canvases. Folks will have a chance to talk about their creations, explore one another's canvases, and process our individual and collective experiences.

Check your Friday email or call the church office to get the link to join the meeting.

Memorial Sunday is November 21

On November 21, Union will celebrate our annual Memorial Sunday, in which we lift up in prayer the lives of our members and friends who have died in the last year, as well as all our loved ones who are deceased.

This year, we are inviting everyone to bring a picture or memento of any loved ones you would like to commemorate. We will create something similar to an Ofrenda, or Dia de los Muertos altar, to honor and celebrate their lives. You may place your items on the altar when you arrive, or during the offertory after the ushers have passed your pew. Please remember to retrieve your items after worship is completed. Those worshipping with us online are encouraged to place their items near their screen during the service.



Advent and Christmas at a Glance



All services are available in person or online at unionucc.com or on our Facebook page, unless otherwise noted.

Sunday, November 28

First Sunday of Advent

We will begin our preparation for the birth of our Lord.

Sunday, December 5

Second Sunday of Advent

John the Baptist and his message of repentance and renewal are the focus on this Second Sunday of Advent. We will gather at our Lord's table in Communion and light our second Advent candle.

Sunday, December 12

Third Sunday of Advent

On this Sunday, we reflect on Mary and her amazing part in the gift of God's love.

Sunday, December 19 (Worship is exclusively online this day)

Fourth Sunday in Advent—Christmas Pageant

We tell the story of Jesus' birth in the drama of the Christmas Pageant. **NO FAITH FORMATION** this Sunday.

Friday, December 24

Christmas Eve

3:00 p.m. — **Our early service** is more informal with special thought given to children's attention spans.

8:00 p.m. — **Our later service** of scripture, carols, and candlelight is preceded by **wonderful Christmas music starting at 7:40 p.m.**

As Union continues to strive to love our neighbors as ourselves, worshippers will be expected to wear masks and maintain social distance between households. When we reach capacity for appropriate social distancing in the sanctuary, worshippers will be directed to overflow seating in our chapel and church hall.

Join us!

Seeking Volunteers for Sunday Morning Children's Sermons

We are looking for volunteers willing to provide a Children's Message during our Sunday church services in 2022. This brief lesson (3 to 5 minutes) would be geared toward the preschoolers and grade schoolers worshipping with us. You can read a short book or give a short object lesson. Volunteers could sign up for a single time, or sign up to be on a rotating schedule.

If you are willing to help, contact Heather Collins (hblue621@gmail.com or call/text 920-639-8821) or Pastor Bridget. Thank you for considering this!

Thank You Gardeners

Please join in offering a hearty thank you to Jone Wood and the Wednesday Weeders and Saturday Snippers for the countless hours they put in to keep our church gardens lush and beautiful this year. Thanks, too, to Cathy Putman for the substantial work she's been doing in the Biblical Garden. Our church grounds are truly lovely, thanks to you, and we are deeply appreciative.

Seeking Musical Talent

Union Church is in need of people to offer their musical gifts (including children and youth) during our Christmas Eve prelude for our 8 p.m. worship service.

If interested, contact music director,
Seong-Kyung Graham at
graham.seong@gmail.com.

Union Church Welcomes Two New Members!

It was our joy to welcome two new members to the faith and fellowship of Union Church on Sunday, October 24! Our new members are:



Stephanie Lazzari Nelson and Amanda Jean Nelson

Stephanie is an oncology dietitian. She enjoys cooking, teaching, fitness classes and cuddling their 5-year-old goldendoodle, Noodle.

Amanda is an associate dean and associate professor at UW-Green Bay. She spends her free time listening to true crime podcasts, running and watching Big Ten sports.

After marrying two years ago, they welcomed Lilliana into the world. Lilly loves listening to music, watching Noodle and reading books.

Amanda and Stephanie's desire to find an inclusive church community that will provide support and a place of comfort for their family led them to Union Church.

Christmas Fund Offering is December 12

The Christmas Fund Offering provides direct financial assistance to retired and active UCC ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas thank-you checks.

Please consider giving to our UCC church family. If contributing by check, simply make out your check to Union Church and indicate Christmas Fund in the memo line. You may also give electronically at unionucc.com. Your gift will be included on your annual giving statement. Thank you, Union family!

Sunday Adult Education

December 12 — 8:45 to 9:40 a.m. [Note the time!]

The Symbolism of “Light in the Darkness” in the Christmas Scriptures

No one knows what time of year Jesus of Nazareth was born. So why do we celebrate his birth on December 25? No doubt you have noticed how short the days are getting; as December progresses, many of us wake up to darkness and come home from work in the dark. The winter solstice (the shortest day of the year) is typically December 21. Then, gradually, the light starts coming back into our world. This is the symbolism of December 25: just as the sun’s light starts to lengthen and strengthen, so does Jesus, the Light of the World, come to us.

On Sunday December 12, Adult Education will focus on the rich symbolism of darkness and light in our lives, and in the biblical Christmas stories. Join us on Zoom!

LEADER: Julie Harder. Questions? jblackharder@gmail.com

VENUE: Zoom*

TIME: 8:45 to 9:40 a.m. (timed to allow people to Zoom in, then drive to worship if they so desire.)

BRING: A Bible – we’ll be looking up passages together

PREP: None necessary, but if you want to peek at our passages, they are: Luke 2:8-14; Matthew 2:1-16; Genesis 1:1-5; John 1:1-9 & 8:12

*Note: A limited number of people can Zoom from various rooms of the church (one person per room in the Chapel, Chapel Classroom, Library, Cloud Room) if they are already in the building.

***Check your Friday email for the Zoom link:**

Or dial 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 857 2465 3717

Passcode: 066558

Greater Green Bay Area Annual Gathered in Gratitude 2021 Interfaith Prayer Service “Grateful for the Stranger”

7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 23
In person at St. Norbert College Parish

Old St. Joseph Church, 123 Grant Street, De Pere
or accessible virtually via Facebook: St. Norbert College Parish
or YouTube: SNC Parish

Go In Peace

After three years in our rehabbed non-profit incubator space in the lower level of the church, the Brain Center of Green Bay is moving to a new space that will be more mission aligned and better suit the needs of their organization. We have been honored to be a part of their early years, and are excited to see how this new chapter allows them to grow and thrive.

This means, of course, that we once again have space to share with a mission aligned non-profit. If you know of a non-profit organization that fits with Union’s mission and vision and is looking for space, have them contact Pastor Bridget to see if this might be Union’s next partnership.

Living Gift Market



Thank you to all who contributed to our Heifer Living Gift Market. Donations can continue to be made to this worthwhile cause through Tuesday, November 30.

Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale

Our tree lot will be open for business on Friday, November 19 and will be open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from then until December 19 or when all the trees and wreaths are sold.

We are asking for help to support this fundraiser by purchasing a tree and/or a wreath and by volunteering to staff the lot for a 2-hour shift. See your Friday email from Union for the link to sign up for shifts, or contact the church office. Thank you.

Tree lot hours:

Friday (4 to 6 p.m.)

Saturday (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)

Sunday (11:15 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Giving Envelopes

If you would like to receive numbered weekly giving envelopes for 2021 and haven't received them in the past, please notify the church office by December 8. You may pick up envelopes as of December 16 outside the church office.

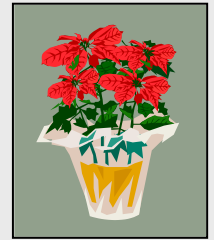
Stock Gifts

If you choose to make a gift of stock to the church and would like your gift to be credited to your account this calendar year, please initiate this transaction no later than December 17. Also, let us know of your intention to make a stock gift so we are aware it is your gift when we see the stock sale come to us.

If you need information on how to make a gift of stock, please contact Katrina Catteruccia at finance@unionucc.com.

Christmas Altar

Please join us in preparing our altar for the Christmas season. We will be purchasing poinsettias by **December 17**. The average cost of each will be \$20.00 (two for \$35). If you wish to contribute, please fill out this order form and return it to the church office, indicating any necessary information for the bulletin.



Poinsettia Contribution

I/we would like to contribute for poinsettias

Name(s) _____

Phone _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Dedication for the Bulletin

Our Church Family

Union Church Calendar

November 20, 2021—December 31, 2021

November 20 Saturday

9:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant
Recording in the Church
Courtyard

November 21 Sunday

MEMORIAL SUNDAY

8:45 a.m. Adult Ed: Pandemic
Canvas Project (Zoom)
9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary

November 23 Tuesday

5:00 p.m. Bell Choir
7:00 p.m. GIFT Gathered in
Gratitude Service at
Old St. Joe's Church at
St. Norbert College or on
the GIFT Facebook page

November 24 Wednesday

NO YOUTH GROUPS

November 25 Thursday

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

November 26 Friday

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

November 28

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary

November 30 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study (Zoom)

December 1 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups
6:15 p.m. Seminary Secrets (Zoom)

December 5

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy
Communion in the
sanctuary

December 7 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study (Zoom)
3:30 p.m. Education Ministry
(Zoom)
4:30 p.m. Outreach Ministry
(Zoom)
5:30 p.m. Worship Ministry (Zoom)

December 8 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups
6:15 p.m. Seminary Secrets (Zoom)

December 9 Thursday

5:00 p.m. Membership and Inreach
Ministry (Zoom)
6:00 p.m. Common Ministry
(Zoom)

December 11 Saturday

9:00 a.m. Stock the Box Drive

December 12

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christmas Fund Offering

8:45 a.m. Adult Ed: The Symbolism
of "Light in the Darkness"
in Christmas Scriptures
(Zoom)
9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary

December 14 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study (Zoom)
3:30 p.m. In-Person Ministry Task
Force (Zoom)
5:00 p.m. Stewardship Ministry
(Zoom)

December 15 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups
6:15 p.m. Seminary Secrets (Zoom)

December 19

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT UNION'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

NO Faith Formation
*Worship, in the form of the pageant,
is exclusively online this day.*
10:00 a.m. Union's Annual
Christmas Pageant on
Facebook or YouTube

December 22 Wednesday

NO Youth Groups

December 24 Friday

CHRISTMAS EVE

3:00 p.m. Early Worship Service
7:40 p.m. The Music of Christmas
8:00 p.m. Later Worship Service

December 25 Saturday

CHRISTMAS DAY

December 26 Sunday

10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary

December 27 Monday and

December 28 Tuesday

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

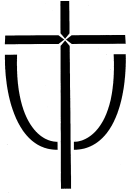
December 29 Wednesday

CHURCH OFFICE IS OPEN
NO Youth Groups

December 30 Thursday and

December 31 Friday

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED



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

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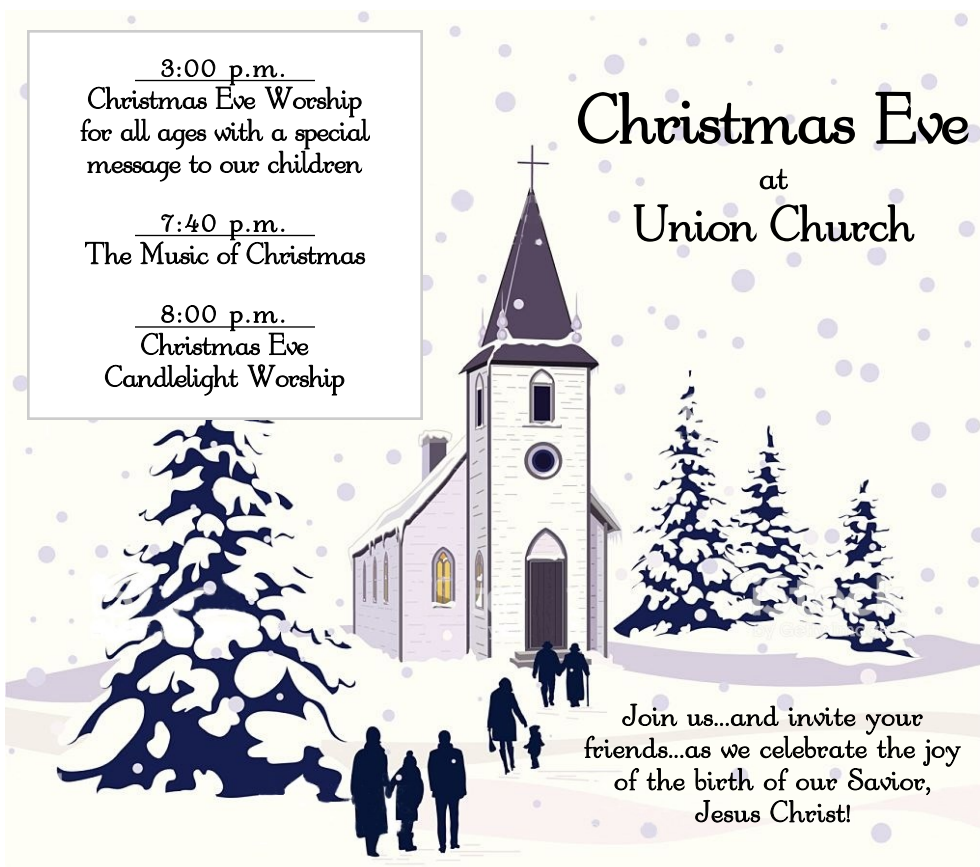
3:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Worship
for all ages with a special
message to our children

7:40 p.m.
The Music of Christmas

8:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve
Candlelight Worship

Christmas Eve

at
Union Church



Join us...and invite your
friends...as we celebrate the joy
of the birth of our Savior,
Jesus Christ!

Union Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Bridget M. Flad Daniels

Senior Minister

Tim Harder, M.D.

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>