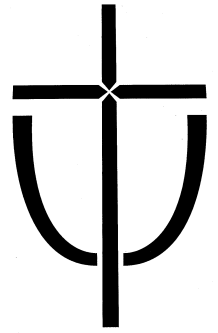


Still Speaking



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

November 2023

The Inside Scoop

Newsletter Deadline

*Our next newsletter
will be published the week
of **December 13, 2023.***

*The deadline for that newsletter
is Friday, **December 8, 2023.***

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The Power of Christmas Cards

A colleague of mine is retired and now spends his “free time” visiting people in jail. It’s actually a lot more elaborate of a process than many might imagine, being cleared to visit people in our jails and prisons and hold worship services. Understaffing at both Brown County Jail and Green Bay Correctional Facility has meant much more limited movement and access to resources for inmates; my friend reports that he was just allowed back into the prison to lead worship for the first time in six months.

Then he told the story of being allowed into a cell block the year before, to distribute Christmas cards. He was allowed to hand the cards to the men, wish them a blessed Christmas, and chat for a bit. He said that more men than you would imagine got teary. A couple of them asked him to read the cards to them. One went back to his locker to get out a card that he had received the year before, telling my friend that it continued to give him hope and strength.

Now, I’ll admit, I’m not much of a Christmas card woman. I love to receive them, to learn about what is going on in people’s families, to see what people find to be inspirational. But with all of the rest of the hustle and bustle of the season, sending cards has been a habit that I’ve allowed to fall by the wayside. And I also admit, I feel guilty about this, especially when I see the effort that others put in. Every year, I tell myself that I’m not going to let it bother me, and every year I’ll get a card from someone who I know is particularly busy and that niggling feeling of guilt will worm its way back in.

That is, until hearing these stories about the power of Christmas cards for inmates.

THIS is card sending I can get behind. This is something that can motivate me to add half an hour to my routine for a few weeknights. To hear that receiving a simple Christmas card with a brief message is something so impactful makes me want to join in and makes me want to encourage you to send them as well.

(continued on page 2)

Lectionary Readings

November 19

25th Sunday after Pentecost

Judges 4:1-7 and Psalm 123 or
Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 and
Psalm 90:1-8, (9-11), 12
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Matthew 25:14-30

November 23

Thanksgiving Day

Deuteronomy 8:7-18 and Psalm 65
2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 17:11-19

November 26

Reign of Christ

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 and Psalm 100
or Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 and
Psalm 95:1-7a
Ephesians 1:15-23; Matthew 25:31-46

December 3

1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

December 10

2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

December 17

3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126 or
Luke 1:46b-55
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24

4th Sunday of Advent

Christmas Eve

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55 or
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

December 25

Christmas Day

Isaiah 62:6-12; Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

(continued from page 1)

And so, you won't be receiving a Christmas card from me this year, and I'm not going to feel guilty. It's not because I wasn't thinking of you and remembering you fondly. Your card went to the Brown County Jail. I suspect you'll approve.

Rev. Bridget Flad Daniels

Christmas Cards for Brown County Jail

You, too, can send Christmas cards to those who are living at Brown County Jail. The following guidelines are required:

- No envelopes
- No crayons
- No magic marker
- Sign your first name only
- No glitter on the cards
- No glued-on decorations or stickers

It's OK to add a short encouraging message or Bible verses. Please PRINT these. Bring any cards you would like to send to those in jail to the church office by Wednesday, December 6.

Christmas Caroling on December 10

Mark your calendars for Christmas Caroling and a potluck on the afternoon of Sunday, December 10. Sign up at Union Central.

12:30 p.m.—Gather at church 3:30 p.m.—Return to church
1:00 p.m.—Caroling begins 4:00 p.m.—Potluck begins

Suzuki Music Academy Holiday Violin Recital

The Suzuki Music Academy invites Union members and friends to their 2023 holiday student violin recital on Saturday, December 2, at 2:00 p.m. in the Union Church sanctuary with refreshments directly following in the church hall. Admission is free.

The Suzuki Music Academy is grateful to be renting space for student lessons at Union and would love for the Union community to hear the fruits of their work.

Our Attendance

October	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
1st Sunday	106	NA
2nd Sunday	NA	65
3rd Sunday	84	74
4th Sunday	103	99
5th Sunday	80	91
Totals	373	329
Average	93.3	82.3

Priscilla Circle Meets November 28

Priscilla Circle will meet on Tuesday, November 28 at 1 p.m. in the English Room.

“Woman Divine” is This Year’s Women’s Advent Event Theme

Union’s annual Women’s Advent Event will take place on Monday, December 4. Doors will open at 6 p.m. for punch and fellowship with the program beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Sign-up sheets are in the church hall or email Denise Olson at myersolson22@gmail.com. Bring a friend; guests are welcome. There is no charge to attend.

Hosting a table entails decorating and setting the table and providing a dessert (store bought or homemade) for 8 people. Coffee and tea will be provided. If hosting seems too big, feel free to work with a friend to co-host a table.

We will again offer a Little Women’s Tea in the Fellowship Room for our toddlers and grade schoolers. Please indicate if your little woman would like to participate in this way.

Men of the church volunteer to help in preparation and cleanup. Men, if you plan to volunteer this year, thank you, and please notify Denise Olson so we know how many helpers we have.

Christmas Fund Offering is December 17

The Christmas Fund Offering provides direct financial assistance to retired and active UCC ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including emergency assistance and Christmas thank-you checks. Please consider giving to our UCC church family.

If contributing by check, 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.

Advent and Christmas at a Glance



Sunday, Dec. 3 1st Sunday of Advent

We begin our preparation for the birth of our Lord. We will gather at our Lord’s table in Communion.

Monday, Dec. 4 Women’s Advent Evening of Reflection

Prepare your spirit for the celebration of our Savior’s birth. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. — Program begins at 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 7 Fill Your Cup: An Evening of Christmas Jazz

6:30 p.m. — Open House for caregivers and families
7:30 p.m. — Christmas Jazz Concert

Saturday, Dec. 9 Christmas Pageant Rehearsal

For the pageant rehearsal schedule, please see page 6.

Sunday, Dec. 10 2nd Sunday in Advent—Christmas Pageant

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

An Afternoon of Christmas Caroling

12:30 p.m. — Gather for Christmas Caroling
1:00 p.m. — Christmas Caroling (return at 3:30 p.m.)
4:00 p.m. — Potluck Begins

Sunday, Dec. 17 3rd Sunday of Advent

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

Sunday, Dec. 24 4th Sunday of Advent—Christmas Eve

Our early service is more informal with special thought given to children’s attention spans. Our later service of scripture, carols, and candlelight is preceded by wonderful Christmas music starting at 7:30 p.m. Join us!

10:00 a.m. Worship with a special welcome to our children

7:30 p.m. The Music of Christmas

8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight worship

Sunday, Dec. 31 New Year’s Eve Worship

Our Sunday morning worship will usher in the new year with prayer and possibility. **NO FAITH FORMATION.**

Sunday Morning Adult Faith Formation

Gather in Bagby Chapel at 9 a.m. for these informative and inspiring conversations:

November 19

A Biblical Voice of Inclusion

In the Old Testament, there is a recurrent theme that the People of Israel are the only ones that their god, Yahweh, cares for. Yet the books of the Bible do not speak with one voice. For example, the book of Ruth challenges that exclusivistic outlook. Not only that, but it's a fun, entertaining story! Join Julie Harder to discover what this delightful tale has to teach us.

December 3

Wonder-Full Christmas: The Nativity as the Mysterious but Real in Art and Music

Dr. Michael Lukens will explore how Christians have marveled at the story of Jesus' birth for at least twenty centuries and how music and art help to shape our understandings.

December 17

Christmas Carols: The Meanings

Dr. Julie Black Harder will lead our final session of the semester in which we'll discover how Matthew's and Luke's proclamations about Jesus were translated into traditional Christmas carols. We'll also consider how recent re-wording of some carols has obscured some of those messages.



Union Church Welcomes 4 New Members!

On November 12, it was our joy to welcome 4 new members to the faith and fellowship of Union Church!



Janeen Hudzinski

Address
Phone

Janeen comes to Union Church from Bethany Reformed Church in Sheboygan after moving to the area. She is married to Nicholas Kroken and the couple has one son, Henry Kroken.

Janeen is happy to join Union in doing the work of God's Kingdom here in Green Bay.



Mike Janowicz

Address
Phone

Mike has lived in Green Bay all his life. He works security at JBS and is engaged to a wonderful man, Zach.

Mike is joining Union Church because he wanted an accepting Christian church. His friends recommended Union, and Mike finally came and felt like he had come home. He is looking forward to being part of this community.

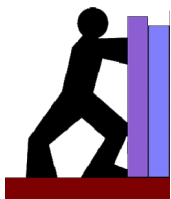


Madeline Marquardt and Ryan Van Handel

Address
Phone 1
Phone 2

Madeline and Ryan are eager to become members of Union Church! They are getting married on October 4, 2024 in Green Bay and were hoping to find a church to become members of and a congregation that felt like family. They are confident they found that in Union Church.

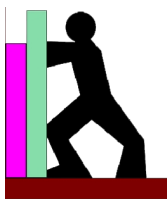
Madeline is an academic advisor at Fox Valley Technical College. Ryan works in data control at ProAmpac. They have two pups, Duke and Seger, that make their lives entertaining. Ryan and Madeline like to be outdoors, camp, travel, try new restaurants and spend time with their friends, family, and furry sons. They look forward to growing in their faith, and getting to know you all!



Your Church Library

Giving Thanks

by Cathy Putman



Growing up in a Congregational church in New England, Thanksgiving hymns that I remember most vividly are “We Gather Together” and “Now Thank We All Our God.” The second is still a Thanksgiving stalwart and will be sung at Union on November 26.

While I associated the hymns’ petitions “the wicked oppressing now cease from distressing” and “free us from all ills”

with the trials the Pilgrims endured in England, that was not the case. Both hymns were written in the context of European wars in the 1600s. So it isn’t surprising that they gained resonance in the United States during and following World War II.

The themes of gratitude and petition are familiar ones in Christianity. In contrast, The Thanksgiving Address of the Haudenosaunee or Iroquois Confederation is a combination of greeting and thanksgiving and spoken often. Those of you who read Braiding Sweetgrass will remember a chapter Kimmerer devoted to the Thanksgiving Address.

The church library holds both a children’s picture book Giving Thanks by Chief Jake Swamp and an explanatory text, The Original Instructions, by Manitonquat. The prayer gives thanks for the gifts of life and sustenance from the earth, plants, animals, wind and weather, stars and moon. This gratitude engenders compassion. Listening to his elders, Manitonquat says, “The more we succeeded in giving thanks, the more often we did that, the more it changed us, the more it gave us support and strength, and the more it connected us to the spirit of Creation.” A wonderful, modern reinterpretation of the Pilgrim holiday.



Capital Campaign Corner

Thank you to all who pledged a total of \$571,880.46 to our Building for Faith in Action Capital Campaign. As of October 31, we have received over \$166,000 of those commitments, which is over 29% of the total pledged. This is a healthy pace for a campaign of our size, and has allowed us to undertake all of our most critical capital projects: the new Mayflower doors are installed and functioning well and the courtyard and south sanctuary tuckpointing is completed. While the timing for getting the west church hall roof re-shingled before the snow settles in may be too ambitious, we’re confident that the roof will last the winter and are poised to hit the ground running in the spring.

Next on the list are replacing some elevator mechanicals and overhauling the Wi-Fi throughout the building, and the other projects on our list will be teed up as funds become available. Stewardship Ministry will keep you informed as we keep completing projects, and are grateful that your pledging has already allowed us to do much needed work.

As you fulfill your Capital Campaign pledge and your regular budget pledge, please make sure to note your intentions for your donation, so that the office staff can direct the funds appropriately.

Union: Faith in Action

Thank you to all who have responded to our Union: Love in Action pledge drive which will fund our ministries for 2024. We appreciate the support we have received to date.

If you haven’t already done so, please prayerfully consider making a pledge to Union’s ministry in 2024. Pledge cards may be returned via the offering plate or to the church office. You can also let us know of your intended pledge by sending an email to finance@unionucc.com or by going to www.unionucc.com/giving.



Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale

Our tree lot opens for business on Friday, November 17 and will be open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from then until December 17 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 2024 and haven't received them in the past, please notify the church office by December 8. You may pick up envelopes as of December 15 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 15. 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.

Our Church Family

Some seasons seem to carry more grief than others, and this seems to be one of those times for many church members. Having die so soon on the heels of has left the south bank of pews feeling noticeably emptier this fall, and we all know of other losses among our congregants—parents and siblings, dear friends and relatives, neighbors and even dreams.

As we move through this season in which the church pays special attention to our beloved departed, let us remember to be gentle with ourselves and one another. A piece of wisdom that I always share with families when we are preparing a funeral bears repeating: the best legacy you can give to those who have died is to love well those they've left behind. May it be so.



Fill Your Cup An Evening of Christmas Jazz and Family Activities December 7 at Union Church

6:30 p.m. — Open House for caregivers and families

7:30 p.m. — Christmas Jazz Concert

All are invited to a Jazz Christmas concert on December 7 at 7:30 p.m. We're also inviting the staff of local social service organizations and their families to a special pre-concert Fill Your Cup Christmas Party at 6:30 p.m. to thank them for all they do to make our community a better place.

Watch your Union communications for ways you can help our church give this holiday gift to the staffs of the many area social service organizations who make our community a better place.

Calling All Angels, Shepherds and Animals!

All are invited to participate in our all ages Christmas Pageant.



Sign up at Union Central

Rehearsal — Saturday, December 9

9:00 a.m. Costume Distribution & Readers

9:45 a.m. Pageant Walk-Through

(rehearsal should be finished by 11 a.m.)

Pageant — Sunday, December 10

8:30 a.m. Costumes & Rehearsal

(sweet rolls & juice available for the cast)

10:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant

Union Church Calendar

November 19, 2023—December 24, 2023

November 19 Sunday

MEMORIAL SUNDAY

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Inclusive Bible
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary or stream it online
- 11:15 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

November 20 Monday

- 11:30 a.m. Ladies Lunch Bunch at the Village Grille

November 21 Tuesday

- 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

November 23 Thursday

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

November 24 Friday

- CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED
- 4:00 p.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

November 25 Saturday

- 10:00 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale
-

November 26 Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary or stream it online
- 11:15 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

November 28 Tuesday

- 12:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 1:00 p.m. Priscilla Circle
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

December 1 Friday

- 4:00 p.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

December 2 Saturday

- 10:00 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale
- 2:00 p.m. SMA Violin Recital

December 3

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Wonder-Full Christmas
- 10:00 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion in the sanctuary or stream it online
- 11:15 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

December 4 Monday

- 6:00 p.m. Women's Advent Event

December 5 Tuesday

- 12:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 2:30 p.m. Education Ministry
- 4:30 p.m. Outreach Ministry
- 5:30 p.m. Worship Ministry
- 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

December 6 Wednesday

- 7:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast Group at Denny's on Oneida
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. Youth Group

December 7 Thursday

- 6:30 p.m. Open House for caregivers and families
- 7:30 p.m. Christmas Jazz Concert

December 8 Friday

- 4:00 p.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

December 9 Saturday

- 9:00 a.m. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal
- 10:00 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale

**See page 3 for our
Advent and Christmas
at a Glance Schedule**

December 10

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

- NO Faith Formation
- 10:00 a.m. Union's Christmas Pageant in the sanctuary or stream it online
- 11:15 a.m. Tree and Wreath Sale
- 12:30 p.m. Gather for Caroling

December 12 Tuesday

- 12:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 5:00 p.m. Stewardship Ministry
- 5:30 p.m. Bell Choir
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

December 14 Thursday

- 5:00 p.m. Membership and Inreach Ministry
 - 6:00 p.m. Common Ministry
-

December 17

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Christmas Fund Offering

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Christmas Carols: the Meanings
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary or stream it online

December 19 Tuesday

- 12:00 p.m. Bible Study

December 20 Wednesday

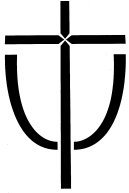
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. Youth Group

December 24 Sunday

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

CHRISTMAS EVE

- 10:00 a.m. Early Worship Service
- 7:30 p.m. The Music of Christmas
- 8:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship Service



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

Return Service Requested

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PERMIT NO. 53
GREEN BAY, WI

Blessing Box Winter Food Drive!

Sunday, December 3rd

Winter temps bring changes to what we can offer in the Blessing Box. The following items are especially helpful. Thank you!

- Granola Bars
- Instant Potatoes or Rice Mixes
- Microwave Soup or Chili
- Microwave Meals
- Pouch Tuna or Chicken
- Ramen Noodle Packs

Please place donations on the cart at the front of the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 3 or on the blue table inside the Mayflower entrance at any time.

To make a monetary donation, please send a check with "Blessing Box" on the memo line, or donate via the church website by clicking on the Giving tab.



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>