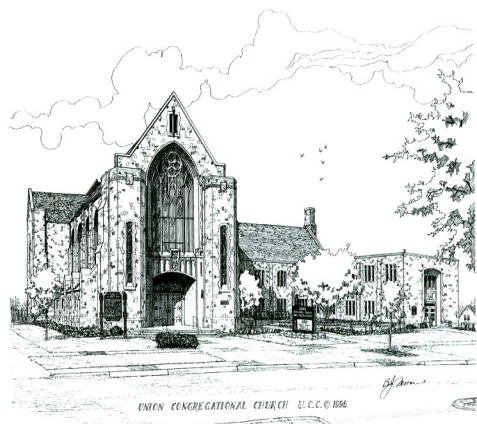
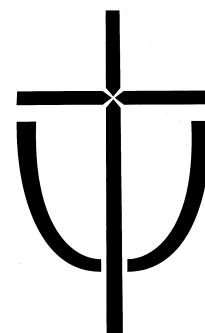




Still Speaking



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

September 2025

The Inside Scoop

Newsletter Deadline

*Our next newsletter
will be published the week of
October 22, 2025.
The deadline for that newsletter is
Friday, **October 17, 2025.***

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Becoming a WISE Congregation: What We Learned This Summer

This summer, our congregation took an important step in exploring what it might mean for Union to become a WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged) church around mental health. WISE is a United Church of Christ initiative that invites congregations to covenant together to take mental health seriously as a matter of faith, compassion, and justice.

As part of this discernment, 39 members and friends of Union participated in our WISE Survey. The results offer a snapshot of the realities many of us face and the longings we hold for a supportive, spiritually grounded community.

When asked about coping strategies for difficult times, the top responses included walking or physical exercise (90%), prayer or meditation (82%), talking to a trusted friend, pastor, or counselor (82%), and spending time in nature (72%). These results tell us that people already have tools for resilience, but they also highlight the importance of relationships, spirituality, and creation as essential to mental well-being.

When asked about the hardest feelings to manage, stress and feeling overwhelmed (53%) came in highest, followed by anxiety (39%), grief (36%), compassion fatigue (33%), and loneliness (28%). These are not abstract statistics—they are the lived experiences of people sitting in our pews and walking alongside us in daily life.

Participants were then invited to imagine what kinds of support our faith community could offer. Half of respondents named the need for help with “big issue” anxiety, and many highlighted connecting spirituality to mental health concerns, grief support, and creating an environment that is more openly supportive of mental health struggles. The survey also revealed a strong interest in specific activities and educational offerings. The top responses included support groups (64%), speakers on mental health topics (62%), intentional friendship gatherings (56%), and nature immersion

(continued on page 2)

Lectionary Readings**September 21****15th Sunday after Pentecost**

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1 and

Psalm 79:1-9 or

Amos 8:4-7 and Psalm 113

1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

September 28**16th Sunday after Pentecost**

Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15 and

Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 or

Amos 6:1a, 4-7 and Psalm 146

1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31

October 5**17th Sunday after Pentecost**

Lamentations 1:1-6 and

Lamentations 3:19-26 or

Psalm 137 or

Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 and

Psalm 37:1-9

2 Timothy 1:1-14; Luke 17:5-10

October 12**18th Sunday after Pentecost**

Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 and

Psalm 66:1-12 or

2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c and Psalm 111

2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19

October 19**19th Sunday after Pentecost**

Jeremiah 31:27-34 and

Psalm 119:97-104 or

Genesis 32:22-31 and Psalm 121

2 Timothy 3:14-4:5; Luke 18:1-8

October 26**20th Sunday after Pentecost**

Joel 2:23-32 and Psalm 65 or

Sirach 35:12-17 or

Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22 and

Psalm 84:1-7

2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18:9-14

(continued from page 1)

experiences (33%). Several participants wrote about their own journeys—through cancer, grief, caregiving, or recovery—and lifted up how meaningful it is simply to be heard and to know that others understand.

Perhaps most encouraging of all, many respondents said they would be willing to get involved personally: leading or participating in support groups or activity groups, helping organize events, mentoring others, or partnering with the WISE team. This tells us that while mental health challenges are real and sometimes overwhelming, the Spirit is also stirring up gifts of compassion, wisdom, and leadership within our congregation.

So what's next? Our WISE team is now working to draft a WISE Covenant, a statement that will outline our commitments as a congregation to be Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaged around mental health. In the coming months, we will share the draft covenant with the congregation through a series of adult education forums. These will be opportunities to learn, to ask questions, to share your own stories, and to shape the covenant together. Once we have done that work, the covenant will be brought before the congregation for a vote.

The survey confirmed what many of us already know: that mental health touches every one of our lives, and that church can be a place of healing, hope, and resilience. Thank you to everyone who took part. Together, we are taking steps toward becoming a truly WISE congregation.

In hope and healing,

Pastor Bridget Flad Daniels

Our Church Family

One of the most powerful gifts of being church is that we do not walk alone. We celebrate, we grieve, we pray, and we show up for each other through all of life's seasons.

•

Together, we are the Body of Christ—rejoicing with those who rejoice, weeping with those who weep, and carrying one another in love.



Heifer Living Gift Market is Sunday, October 19

Heifer International is an organization that works with communities to end world hunger and poverty. Through our Heifer Living Gift Market we hope to inspire our church family to get involved in ending hunger and poverty, bringing the commandment to love our neighbors to life. Families who receive our gifts not only benefit from the animals, they also pass on the gift to other families in their community. This allows them to help others as we have helped them.

Our goal is to fill an ark by raising \$5,000 or more. This can be done with your gift of a goat, heifer, water buffalo, alpaca, llama, sheep, pig, fish fingerlings, rabbits, honeybees, ducks, chickens, and more.

Come to the courtyard after church on October 19. We will have exhibits and treats (including treats for our special visitors) and enjoy the Living Gift Market. Sign up at Union Central to host a table.



Priscilla Circle News

Priscilla Circle returns at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, September 23, in the English Room. **CHANGE THIS FOR ONLINE VERSION.**

Questions, please contact Helen Krueger at chkruieger@new.rr.com.

Good Neighbor Week

Union Church is partnering with Neighborworks Green Bay to participate in Good Neighbor Week by helping our neighbors with minor home repairs or yard work. Our shift is **Wednesday, September 24 from 12:30 to 4 p.m.** Sign up at Union Central or contact the church office.

Neighbors in Need

The United Church of Christ offers grants to organizations nationwide engaged in justice work. Our church will support this effort with a special offering on Sunday, October 5. Any gift, no matter the amount, shows we share a hope for a world free of poverty and prejudice.

Fox River Trail "Social Walk"

Our next Fox River Trail "Social Walk" will take place at 9 a.m. on Saturday, October 18. Meet in the church parking lot. All participants will walk at their own pace, 20 minutes down the trail and 20 minutes back. After, we will socialize over coffee/tea and breakfast goodies in the church hall. Bring a friend!

The Kindness Project

I hope you got as much inspiration as I did reading our congregants' many definitions of kindness for the church sign the last three months. While I only put 11 messages on the sign, we received over 40 suggestions! Who knew there were so many ways to define what kindness is? Amazing!

However you define it, I hope you will agree that, treating others with kindness makes life worth living. Thank you again for participating.

—Achim Seifert

Dignity and Respect
Opening Your Heart
Love in Action
Being for Others
Peace and Love
A Heartfelt Smile
Dream, Hope, Believe
Always Worth It
Speaking Peace
Lending a Hand
A Place at the Table
A Song of Peace
Not Selfishness

Taking Action
Opening the Door
When Everyone Thrives
Heartfelt Thanks
Helping Those with Less
Joy All Around
Being Peaceful
Offering Your Time
Ending Racism
Patience and Grace
Reflecting God
Stopping Hate
Critical for Peace
Action Not Words

Reaching Out to Others
An Outstretched Hand
Welcoming All
A Light in the Dark
Making Good Trouble
Sharing Your Gifts
Loving the Other
Paying Attention
Sharing Generously
Caring for All
Being Good to Yourself
Looking for Ways to Help
Comforting the Troubled

Two more thoughts that were too long but worth sharing here:

"When injustice becomes law, resistance becomes duty."

—No definitive origin

"Think occasionally of the suffering of which you spare yourself the sight."

—Albert Schweitzer

Blessing Box Food Drive Sunday, October 5

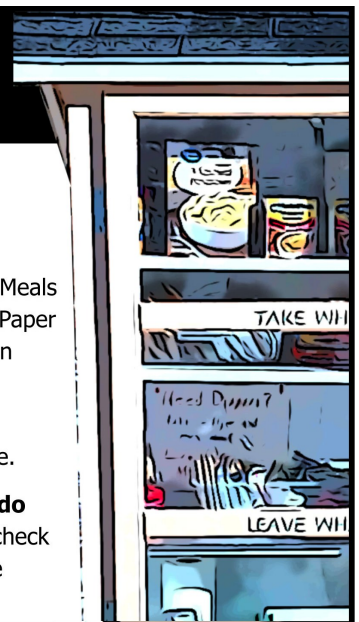
Thank you for your continuing support of the Blessing Box ministry!

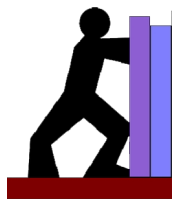
Current needs include:

- Canned Chili or Pasta Meals
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Vegetables
- Canned Spaghetti Sauce
- Instant Pasta or Rice Meals
- Paper Towels / Toilet Paper
- Pouch Tuna or Chicken
- Ramen Noodle Packs

Donations can be placed on the blue table inside the Mayflower entrance on Sunday, October 5 or at any time.

Monetary donations are also welcome, and we'll do the shopping! To make a monetary donation, send a check with "Blessing Box" on the memo line, or donate via the church website at www.unionucc.com/giving.

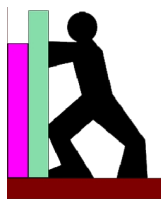




Your Church Library

"Stolen Pride"

by Cathy Putman



In Stolen Pride: Loss, Shame, and the Rise of the Right, sociologist Arlie Hochschild seeks to understand how Americans have become so polarized in their politics. The book is based on research Hochschild did in Kentucky in the small towns which were hollowed out by the loss of coal jobs and an influx of OxyContin propelled by targeted marketing and availability.

Hochschild parallels economic loss with a losing economy of pride, a claim she develops with considerable nuance. Through time spent with several residents of Pikeville, Kentucky and surrounds over a three year period, she breaks down congealed stereotypes of hillbillies and the area's deeply conservative and not so conservative institutional leaders as they express views on racism, neighborliness, white supremacy, Democratic Party, social justice issues, addiction, and the central value and measure of hard work.

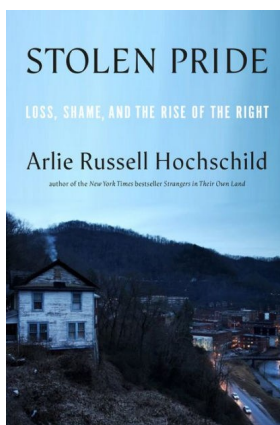
The book covers ideas that have been aired by other sociologists intent on analyzing recent changes in U. S. society. Caste by Isabel Wilkerson separates the identification of social class from race. Deaths of Despair by Angus Deaton and Anne Case is a documentation of the health consequences of social class on middle aged white men – death from drug overdoses, suicide and alcohol liver disease – that figure prominently in small towns in Appalachia.

The U. S. Representative from Delaware, Sarah McBride, talking about our political divides, pointed to a loss of grace in our across-the-aisle conversations. By grace she means space to disagree or only partly agree with doctrinaire party positions. Her usage comes from her Presbyterian background.

Grace is what Hochschild gives to those with whom she talks. When she broaches the topic of a stolen election in 2020 with her subjects, she doesn't hesitate to point out "the steal" was not verified by any independent measure but accepts that "the steal" is a mythic narrative that means something other than objective truth to many of them.

Accepting the role a falsehood plays in our across-the-aisle conversations can be a stumbling block for many. Yet often we accept guiding stories, mythic Biblical stories without the same level of discomfort.

The library is not collecting books on Christian nationalism, but we did receive a donation of Andrew Whitehead's American Idolatry: How Christian Nationalism Betrays the Gospel and Threatens the Church. Reporter Tim Alberta's 2023 book, The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory: American Evangelicals in an Age of Extremism, is worth reading by those interested in the details of the who and how of the movement.

**Christmas is Right Around the Corner!**

Your Christmas Tree and Wreath Committee has put in the orders and we are looking forward to our eighth year for this church-wide fundraiser. As you know, this is an all-hands-on-deck church event that takes scores of people to pull off. First, some dates to put on your calendar.

Saturday, November 8 at 9 a.m.

Wreath tent and tree lot assembly (weather permitting). We will need at least six people.

Saturday, November 15 at 9 a.m.

Wreath decorating in the church hall. The more the merrier.

Friday, November 21 at 2 p.m.

Wreath tent and tree lot opens. Get the best trees and wreaths early.

There are sign up sheets for the first two events in Union Central.

You can help now by looking through your Christmas items that you may want to discard and save any you think would look good on a wreath. Please box them up and bring to the church hall the week starting Monday, November 10. There will be tables to place your treasures along the window wall. If you would like us to create matching wreaths, please chat with Jeff Carels before that week. Thanks again for supporting this fun and important fund raiser.

—Christmas Tree and Wreath Committee



Sojourner Circle News

Thursday, October 2 at 6:00 p.m.

Home of Emily Lakatos, Bay Beach Wildlife Sanctuary

Join us for the next Sojourner Circle gathering as we begin our fall season together. Enjoy food, fellowship, and fun, with opportunities to deepen and form new friendships. Email emilyclakatos@gmail.com for more information.

Thursday, October 16 at 6:00 p.m. — Union Church Kitchen

Sojourner Circle will gather to prepare and package freezer meals for Cooks Who Care, our church ministry that keeps the freezer stocked with ready-to-bake meals. These meals are available for anyone in the congregation—or anyone they know—who could use the gift of a homemade meal. Email emilyclakatos@gmail.com for more information.

Sojourner Circle is a group of women supporting each other's navigations through career decisions, raising children, personal growth, mid-life reflections, and more.

All who identify as women are welcome.

Our Attendance

August	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
1st Sunday	78	73
2nd Sunday	89	76
3rd Sunday	96	73
4th Sunday	103	NA
5th Sunday	93	
Totals	459	222
Average	91.8	74.0

Affirmations for Spiritual Growth Class

October 1, 8 and 15 at 6:30 p.m. in Bagby Chapel

Applying the techniques developed by Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, Dr. Maxwell Maltz and Paramahansa Yogananda, (founder of Self Realization Fellowship), Union member George Ochs will be offering a three-session class on the practice of spiritual affirmations.

The initial session will provide an overview of the basic steps and key points towards achieving the highest benefits from these affirmations. This will be followed up in each session with a guided affirmation, each between 15 and 20 minutes, on topics that lead toward life-improving skills. The following words will be applied through these sessions: *Imagination, Visualization, Prayer, Affirmation and Meditation.*

Dates: Wednesdays, October 1, 8, and 15

Time: 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Place: Bagby Chapel

Sign up: Email George at geochs@gmail.com

Questions? Contact George at geochs@gmail.com

Sunday Adult Ed: “The Potential and Peril of Political Theology” October 5 at 9:00 a.m. in the Chapel Classroom

As part of Union Church’s Adult Faith Formation, Dr. Michael Lukens will present “The Potential and Peril of Political Theology” at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 5. Dr. Lukens writes, “Jesus exposes the difficult posture of a faith that is simultaneously socially-active and intentionally-moral. Our discussion in today’s climate needs to focus on the present challenge of ‘political theology’: how is it both potentially valuable and yet also perilous?” Join us!

Union Church Calendar

September 21, 2025—October 26, 2025

September 21 Sunday

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: History of
Women's Fellowship
Groups at Union Church
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
(or stream it online)
followed by Coffee Hour
in the church hall

September 23 Tuesday

1:00 p.m. Priscilla Circle
6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

September 24 Wednesday

12:30 p.m. Good Neighbor Project
1:00 p.m. Bible Study
6:15 p.m. Seminary Secrets

September 28 Sunday

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
(or stream it online)
followed by Coffee Hour
in the church hall

September 30 Tuesday

6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

October 1 Wednesday

7:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast Group
at Denny's on Oneida
1:00 p.m. Bible Study
5:45 p.m. Dinner
6:15 p.m. Youth Groups
6:30 p.m. Affirmations for Spiritual
Growth

October 2 Thursday

6:00 p.m. Sojourner Circle

October 5 Sunday

World Communion Sunday Neighbors in Need Offering

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Potential and
Peril of Political Theology
10:00 a.m. Worship with
Holy Communion
in the sanctuary
(or stream it online)

October 7 Tuesday

4:30 p.m. Outreach Ministry (Zoom)
5:30 p.m. Worship Ministry
(canceled)
6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

October 8 Wednesday

1:00 p.m. Bible Study
6:30 p.m. Affirmations for Spiritual
Growth

October 9 Thursday

5:00 p.m. Membership Ministry
(canceled)
6:00 p.m. Common Ministry

October 12 Sunday

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
(or stream it online)
followed by Coffee Hour

October 14 Tuesday

4:00 p.m. Education Ministry
5:00 p.m. Stewardship Ministry
5:30 p.m. Bell Choir
6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

October 15 Wednesday

1:00 p.m. Bible Study
5:30 p.m. Prospective Member
Gathering

5:45 p.m. Dinner

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups

6:30 p.m. Affirmations for Spiritual
Growth

October 16 Thursday

6:00 p.m. Sojourner Circle

October 18 Saturday

9:00 a.m. Fox River Trail
Social Walk
11:00 p.m. Celebration of Life for
Barb Strom

October 19 Sunday

Heifer Sunday

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
(or stream it online)
11:00 a.m. Heifer Living Gift Market
in the courtyard

October 20 Monday

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

October 21 Tuesday

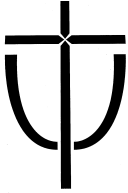
1:00 p.m. Priscilla Circle
5:30 p.m. Bell Choir
6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

October 22 Wednesday

1:00 p.m. Bible Study

October 26 Sunday

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
(or stream it online)
followed by Coffee Hour
in the church hall



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

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Interested in Learning More About Union Church?

Interested in learning more about Union Congregational UCC and discerning whether this is the right church home for you? Our Membership Ministry will be hosting two classes to help people get to know Union, our community, and each other on **Wednesday, October 15 at 5:30 p.m.** and on **Thursday, October 30 at 6:00 p.m.** It's helpful to participate in both sessions.

After those two sessions, people who would like to join the church will be received into membership during worship on Sunday, November 16.

Please contact the church office at office@unionucc.com or 920-437-9266, to register.

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

Heather Collins

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>