

Union Congregational United Church of Christ



CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

December 21, 2025

Our sanctuary is equipped with a hearing loop. You can access the loop by activating the T-coil in your hearing aid. If you do not have a T-coil, you can request a portable receiver from an usher.



Welcome to Union Church!

- Today's service is being live streamed via Facebook and YouTube.
- During the Children's Moments, the live stream will display a graphic, in order to protect our children's privacy.
- Please see an usher if you would like a children's activity packet or if you need help finding the nursery.
- Visitors are encouraged to fill out a visitor card at the usher's station or email office@unionucc.com to receive our weekly email newsletter.
- Visitors, if you would like more information about our church, please take home a yellow "Welcome to Union Church" folder located at either sanctuary door. If you have trouble finding them, ask one of our friendly members to help you locate one!
- We encourage those who are COVID positive or have cold or flu symptoms to worship from home and to consult with your healthcare provider to ensure you are engaging in best practices regarding masking, distancing, and receiving vaccines/boosters.

Christmas Eve at Union Church

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

3:00 p.m.

Worship for all ages with a
special message to our children
(no nursery)

7:30 p.m.

The Music of Christmas

8:00 p.m.

Candlelight Worship
(nursery open)





Serving Christ...Loving Each...Affirming All

The Christmas Pageant

December 21, 2025

10:00 a.m.

Child care is provided in our nursery from 8:45 to 11:30 a.m.

(*) invites all who are able to stand

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE:

"God Rest You Merry"

arr. Rebecca Groom Te Velde

With music and silence we begin worship, praying quietly and opening our hearts to God.

THE LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY

Welcome! We share Announcements, Ministry Opportunities, Joys and Concerns.

PRAISING OUR GOD

THE BOND OF UNION (in unison)

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.

* ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING:

"Come Hope"

Amanda Udis-Kessler

1
Come hope to our deep des-pair. Come peace in a time of war. Come

2
Come hope to our deep despair. Come peace in a time of war.

3
Come hope. Come peace

5
1
joy to a world of pain. Come love. Bring us home a - gain.

2
Come joy to a world of pain. Come love. Bring us home a - gain.

3
Come joy. Come love.

Leader: Last week, we lit the candles of Hope, Peace, and Joy. Today, we kindle Love. Love that is more than sentiment, Love that is wonder made flesh.

All: Love invites us to marvel at the sacredness of all existence.

Leader: The Love of God-With-Us is never abstract. It pours itself out in solidarity, in repair, in showing up for one another. It grows in wonder—wonder at our shared humanity, wonder at the God who chooses vulnerability, wonder at the possibility of a world remade by compassion.

All: This Love asks for our whole selves—our courage, our tenderness, our willingness to heal.

Leader: Love becomes visible wherever awe becomes action, where delight leads to generosity, where wonder teaches us to belong to each other.

All: May this Advent prepare the way for Love that transforms.

Leader: We light this final candle for Love—
love that interrupts despair,
love that invites justice,
love that gathers us into a wider, wilder story.

**All: May Love be birthed among, within, and through us this Advent.
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.**

All Sing Refrain Again

THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS

JERUSALEM: HEROD'S QUARTERS

*ADVENT HYMN:

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

ADESTE FIDELES

*O come all ye faith-ful, joy-ful and tri-um-phant.
O come ye, O come ye to Beth-le-hem.
Come and be-hold Him, born the king of an-gels.*

*O come, let us a-dore Him.
O come, let us a-dore Him.
O come, let us a-dore Him.
Christ, the Lord!*

*Sing choirs of an-gels, sing in ex-ul-ta-tion.
Sing all ye cit-i-zens of heaven a-bove.
Glo-ry to God, all glo-ry in the high-est.*

*O come, let us a-dore Him.
O come, let us a-dore Him.
O come, let us a-dore Him.
Christ, the Lord!*

THE ANNUNCIATION AND VISIT WITH ELIZABETH

CAROL:

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

VENI EMMANUEL

*O come, O come, Em-man-u-el,
And ran-som cap-tive Is-ra-el,
That mourns in lone-ly ex-ile here,
Un-til the Son of God ap-pear.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
Shall come to thee, O Is-ra-el!*

THE MAGNIFICAT:

Luke 1:46-55

JOSEPH'S DREAM

THE JOURNEY

*PASSING THE PEACE

(Please join the townspeople in passing the peace, moving out of the pews to do so, with the words:
“*Peace be with you,*” or “*Shalom.*” Please return to your pews when you hear a loud clang.)

NO ROOM AT THE INN

CAROL:

“*Away in a Manger*”

AWAY IN A MANGER

*A-way in a man-ger, no crib for a bed,
The lit-tle Lord Je-sus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
The lit-tle Lord Je-sus, a-sleep on the hay.

The cat-tle are low-ing, the ba-by a-wakes,
but lit-tle Lord Je-sus, no cry-ing He makes;
I love Thee, Lord Je-sus, look down from the sky,
and stay by my cra-dle till morn-ing is nigh.*

SHEPHERDS AND ANGELS

CAROL:

“*The First Nowell*”

THE FIRST NOWELL

*The first Now-ell, the an-gel did say,
Was to cer-tain poor shep-herds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keep-ing their sheep,
On a cold win-ter's night that was so deep.*

Refrain:

*Now-ell, Now-ell, Now-ell, Now-ell,
Born is the King of Is-ra-el.*

*They look-ed up and saw a star
Shin-ing in the east, be-yond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it con-tin-ued both day and night.*

Refrain:

*Now-ell, Now-ell, Now-ell, Now-ell,
Born is the King of Is-ra-el.*

CAROL:

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

GLORIA

*An-gels we have heard on high
Sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
And the moun-tains in re-ply
Ech-o-ing their joy-ous strains.
Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o,
Glo-ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o.*

CHILDREN'S CHOIR:

"Do You Hear What I Hear"

HEROD AND THE MAGI

CAROL:

"We Three Kings"

KINGS OF ORIENT

*We three kings of O-ri-ent are,
bear-ing gifts we trav-erse a-far,
field and foun-tain, moor and moun-tain,
fol-low-ing yon-der star.*

Refrain:

*O star of won-der, star of night,
star with roy-al beau-ty bright,
west-ward lead-ing, still pro-ceed-ing,
guide us to thy per-fect light.*

*Born a king on Beth-le-hem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him a-gain,
King for-ev-er, ceas-ing nev-er,
o-ver us all to reign.*

Refrain:

CAROL:

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

ST. LOUIS

*O lit-tle town of Beth-le-hem, How still we see thee lie!
A-bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si-lent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shin-eth The ev-er-last-ing Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to-night.*

RESPONDING IN FAITH

PRAYER REPONSE

Pastor: You speak to your people through angels, even if oftentimes we have entertained them unawares.

All: Keep our ears and hearts open to the messengers of God.

Pastor: You reveal your grace to shepherds and kings, factory workers, and captains of industry.

All: Keep us watchful and waiting for the unexpected ways your grace will reveal itself to each one of us.

Pastor: You come to us as a vulnerable, defenseless child.

All: Keep us vigilant, that we might shelter everyone who bears your image.

OUR LORD'S PRAYER

Please join us in praying the Lord's Prayer in these words or a translation meaningful to you.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE OFFERING

Offertory: *"Silent Night"*

arr. Carolyn Taylor

*Praise Response: *"We Give You But Your Own"*

Text: William W. How, 1864; alt. Music: Cantica Laudis, Lowell Mason and G. J. Webb, 1850

The musical score is written for two staves, Treble and Bass, in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like. The lyrics are: "We give you but your own, what - e'er the gift may be; All that we have is yours a - lone, we give it grate-ful - ly." The score ends with a double bar line.

*Prayer of Dedication

SENT INTO ALL THE WORLD

*CAROL:

"Joy to the World"

ANTIOCH

*Joy to the World, the Lord is come!
Let earth re-ceive her King;
Let ev-'ry heart pre-pare Him room,
And heav'n and na-ture sing,
And heav'n and na-ture sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and na-ture sing.*

*Joy to the World, the Sav-ior reigns!
Let all their songs em-ploy;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Re-peat the sound-ing joy,
Re-peat the sound-ing joy,
Re-peat, re-peat, the sound-ing joy.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the na-tions prove
The glo-ries of His righ-teous-ness,
And won-ders of His love,
And won-ders of His love,
And won-ders, won-ders, of His love.*

*THE BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE:

"Savior of the Nations, Come"

arr. Hugo Distler

Each year we invite the family of one of the recently born children in our community to serve as the Modern Day Holy Family in our annual Christmas Pageant. This family represents all of us as the family of Christ in the world. This year we are excited to have **Libby Sievert, Jessica Lundgren** and their children **Alice and Toby** represent us.

Blessing Box Food Drive Sunday, January 4

Thank you for your continued support!

Winter-weather needs include:

- Pouch Chicken
- Ramen Noodle Packs
- Pouch Tuna
- Cereal
- Protein Snack Bars
- Chili Meal—single-serve microwave
- Mac & Cheese Meal—single-serve microwave

Weekly Planner

December 22 — 27

Tuesday:

6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

Wednesday — Christmas Eve

3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve
Family Service

7:30 p.m. The Music of Christmas

8:00 p.m. Christmas Eve
Candlelight Worship

The Church Office Closes at noon

Thursday — Christmas Day

A Blessed Christmas to All!

Souper Cooks

The Church Office is Closed

Friday

The Church Office is Closed

NEXT SUNDAY: December 28 **First Sunday after Christmas**

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

Union Congregational United Church of Christ is an **Open and Affirming Congregation**. We are a Christian fellowship where diverse perspectives may live together in the Spirit of Christ and where all persons are precious children of God without qualification or discrimination because of ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, or sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

e-mail: office@unionucc.com

church office: 920-437-9266

website: www.unionucc.com

Men's Breakfast Group

Wednesday, January 7

7:00 a.m. at Denny's
2894 S. Oneida Street

Our Church Staff

Senior Minister..... Bridget Flad Daniels
Administrative Assistant Eric Goska
Financial Secretary Katrina Catteruccia
Building & Maintenance Supervisor..... Brad Dorin
Music Director..... Haley Steele
Organist..... Franklin Beyer
Handbell Ensemble Director..... Linda Cook
Librarian..... Cathy Putman
AV Coordinator Daniel Hatton

Student Music Interns:

Zeke Fietsch-Huber, Caleb Hale,
Caitlyn Kolter, Ella Hamilton

Nursery Attendants:

Jenna Stevens, London Graham, Katelyn Mertens, Scott Nixon

190 Years of Faithfulness—and Counting

On January 11, our congregation will celebrate a remarkable milestone: 190 years of gathering, worshipping, questioning, serving, and loving. That is no small thing. In a world where so much is fleeting, 190 years of community is a testament to God's persistent presence—and to generations of people who trusted that showing up together matters.

We will mark this anniversary in worship on Sunday, January 11, with the Rev. Franz Rigert, Conference Minister of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ, preaching. Following worship, we'll gather for a light luncheon—a chance to linger, reconnect, and celebrate one another as we officially kick off a year-long anniversary celebration.

Seminary Secrets: What Do We Do With Paul?

What one person shaped Christianity most profoundly? Most would answer, “Jesus, of course.” But a case can be made that the Apostle Paul was at least as influential. In Paul's letters, we find terms and concepts that Jesus apparently never uttered, but which became woven into classic Christian theology, ethics, and jargon. This influence is particularly astonishing given that Paul was not a follower of Jesus during Jesus' earthly ministry; in fact, most scholars have concluded that Paul never even met or listened to Jesus. (Somewhat weirdly, he never even mentions Jesus's basic teachings.)

Understanding Paul's thought is further complicated by the fact that of the 13 letters in the New Testament that claim his authorship, only seven were indisputably written by him. Hence, some of what is commonly attributed to Paul was actually written by later authors.

We spend a lot of time studying the gospels, but I have found studying Paul to be indispensable in understanding how Christian theology got where it did and which theologies are still worthy of respect. I've concluded that Paul's letters contain both profoundly helpful insights and claims that either have little to do with Jesus' teachings or are hopelessly anachronistic. How to tell the difference is key!

The Paul Series will be held 6:15 to 7:30 p.m.

on Wednesdays, January 14, 21, 28; February 4, 11, 25; and March 4.

To sign up and get the readings, email Julie Harder at jblackharder@gmail.com.

WHAT: We learn to interpret the Bible using the standard critical tools that mainstream biblical scholars employ. Their purpose is to discover what the original author of a text was trying to say to his original audience. We then consider how (and if) this message is still relevant.

HYBRID OPTION: Seminary Secrets classes have both an in-person and Zoom-in option.

“HOMEWORK”: Most sessions have a short reading assignment to be completed beforehand.

WHAT IF I CAN'T COME TO ALL SESSIONS? If you miss a session, you're encouraged to view or listen to the Zoom recording.

QUESTIONS? Email Julie at jblackharder@gmail.com.

Christmas Pageant Participants

Narrators: Sue Tucker, Michael Vinson, Michael Lukens

Biblical Mary: Kaylee Caylor

Biblical Joseph: Adrian Caylor

Modern Family: Jessica, Libby, Toby Lundgren

Baby Jesus: Alice Lundgren

Star Angel: Lily Champeau

Lead Angel: Amy Richards

Angel Gabriel: Drew Ferry

Angels: Edith Berken, Helen Berken, Tillie Corwin, Valentina Espinosa, Elle Ferry, Audrey Piontek, Ellie Vinson-Kane

Herod: Olivia VerGiesen

Herod's Scribe: Elijah Vinson-Kane

Herod's Lead Advisor: Luc Richards

Elizabeth: Nicole Polarek

Innkeeper: Carter Reese

Animal Wrangler: Emily Lakatos

Animals: Josie Flad Daniels, Elle Lakatos, John Lakatos

Lead Shepherd: Jason Ferry

Shepherds: Theo Corwin, Will Ferry, Jayden Stewart, Jeremiah Stewart

Magi: Charlie Reese, Evie Richards, Ed Tucker

Camel Wrangler: Daniel Hatton

Camel: Jade Hatton, Xavier Hatton

Drummer: Cael Richards

Directors: Heather Collins, Christie Reese

Music Director: Haley Steele

Musicians: Cael Richards (drums), Franklin Beyer (organ and piano)

House Lights: Tim Dantoin

Costume Curators and Fitters: Gail Carels, Betty Hartman, Amanda Hatton, Bev Lathrop, Sandy Polarek

Pastor: Rev. Bridget Flad Daniels