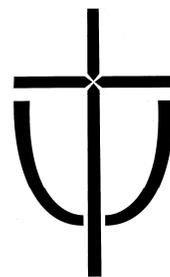




Still Speaking



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

February 2017

The Inside Scoop

Newsletter Deadline

*Our next newsletter will be published the week of **March 1, 2017.***

*The deadline for that newsletter is Friday, **February 24, 2017.***

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Dear Union Friends,

Last week, I used the phrase, “the truth will set us free.”

The context was a conversation with a colleague about investigating a possible Safe Sanctuary violation at her church and the importance of addressing abuse allegations with transparency, honesty, and integrity.

The truth will set us free.

This is a cornerstone belief of mine. It is what has put steel in my spine when I’ve had to take difficult stances on behalf of what is right. It has given me comfort when my character has been maligned and I felt afraid and alone. It is what has made my heart explode with gratitude when it bears fruit.

The truth will set us free.

What an odd time that we live in, that we have to defend the truth. That alt-facts are fashionable. That bold-faced lies are waved around like flags we should be proud of.

Christianity, at its core, has always been counter cultural. It has always been about favoring God’s ways over the ways of the world.

In these days of divisive politics, regardless of your party affiliation, let us all commit to this most fundamental of values: truth. Let us uphold the truth. Let us be truthful with ourselves and with each other. Let us be willing to be swayed by the truth. Let us be champions of the truth. Let truth be the cornerstone of what we teach our children. Let us be transformed by the truth, even when it is painful, even when it shifts us from our long-held beliefs. Let truth be our banner, and integrity our stand.

We know that God is Truth, with a capital “T.” Therefore, our source is Truth. May the flowering of Truth also be our ultimate goal.

In Joyful Hope of the Coming of the Kingdom,
Pastor Bridget Flad Daniels

Lectionary Readings

February 5

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Isa 58:1-9a, (9b-12)
 Ps 112:1-9 (10)
 1 Cor 2:1-12, (13-16)
 Matt 5:13-20

February 12

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 or
 Sir 15:15-20
 Psalm 119:1-8
 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
 Matt 5:21-37

February 19

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18
 Psalm 119:33-40
 1 Cor 3:10-11, 16-23
 Matt 5:38-48

February 26

Transfiguration

Ex 24:12-18
 Ps 2 or Ps 99
 2 Pet 1:16-21
 Matt 17:1-9

March 1

Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isa 58:1-12
 Ps 51:1-17
 2 Cor 5:20b-6:10
 Matt 6:16, 16-21

March 5

First Sunday in Lent

Gen 2:15-17, 3:1-7
 Ps 32
 Rom 5:12-19
 Matt 4:1-11

Our Church Family

Altar Flowers

Please consider providing flowers for the altar in memory of a loved one or in celebration of a special event. These dates are available for you to provide flowers:



All of February



Please call the church office at 437-9266 or sign up on the board next to the office if you'd like to provide altar flowers. Thank you.

Our Attendance

December	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
1st Sunday	156	152
2nd Sunday	128	138
3rd Sunday	229	273
4th Sunday <small>(Christmas Day in 2016)</small>	56	114
Totals	569	677
Average	142.3	169.3
Dec. 24 early	118	127
Dec. 24 late	243	245

January	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>
1st Sunday <small>(New Year's Day in 2017)</small>	102	129
2nd Sunday	154	123
3rd Sunday	186	111
4th Sunday	125	125
5th Sunday	179	127
Totals	746	615
Average	149.2	123.0

Responding to the Call for Immigrant Justice

How can Union Church respond in light of our Biblical faith?

Upcoming Opportunities for Learning Together

The Advocacy Team invites you to participate in the following events as our church considers whether to join other UCC congregations in becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation.



Join us for an upcoming BOOK GROUP at Union!

We will be reading *The Book of Unknown Americans: A Novel* by Cristina Henríquez. Winner of a several book awards, Henríquez's stories illuminate the lives behind the current debates about Latino immigration. You can check out a book or audio book from the county library or purchase a new or used copy through a book dealer. Then, plan to join in a discussion or two at Union after becoming familiar with the novel. Discussions will be held on:

Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Bagby Chapel and
Sunday, February 19, 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Room
A light lunch will be provided at Sunday's discussion.

Our dialogue will be a great introduction to Union's upcoming study of the needs of immigrants within our community.

Study & Discernment: Four-Part Lenten Study Series

Our resource is *Becoming Welcoming Communities*, a study guide for congregations developed by the WI Council of Churches, designed to help congregations respond to immigrants and immigration in light of Biblical faith. The course weaves together Wisconsin history, Bible passages, personal stories, and information on immigration policies.

Each of the sessions will be offered on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. The four Sunday morning adult forums will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. on March 5, 19, 26, April 2. The four Wednesday evening sessions will take place from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on March 8, 15, 22, and 29, with Wednesday April 5 in reserve. Participants can mix and match attending on Sunday and Wednesday according to their convenience.

Second Sunday Series (April 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.)

Marisa Leza, Bilingual Admissions Adviser, UW-Green Bay will share her personal experience as a DREAMER. Marisa provides this brief overview:

"I grew up in the United States. I was brought to the United States at the age of four. I received my education in this country, was able to get a full-ride scholarship to St. Norbert College. I graduated from SNC in 2013 with a psychology major and a communication minor. My first job out from college was working with Voces de la Frontera, a non-profit organization in the Milwaukee area that advocates for immigrant rights. I was the field organizer in the Green Bay community. I had the opportunity to organize press conferences, panels, and vigils that advocated for Immigration Reform."

Sign up now for these opportunities at Union Central. Thank you!

Questions? Talk with an Advocacy Team member: Barbara McClure-Lukens, Paco Espinosa, Lloyd Schaefer, Sylvia Garrido, Steve Jones, Bryan Lipke, Aaron Alexander-Wolf and Tim Harder.

Ash Wednesday is March 1

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 1. We will worship in the sanctuary at 7 p.m. The service offers us the possibility to renew our dedication to the ways of Jesus. We will receive ashes, representing old lives and God's gracious promise of forgiveness and new life. Join us!

Priscilla Circle Meets February 28

Members of Priscilla Circle will gather at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28 in the English Room.

OGHS Offering is March 26

Our One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be collected on Sunday, March 26. The needs are many—agricultural training, food, and relief supplies—but by responding to needs as best we are able, we help make possible a better world.

Envelopes will be available in the bulletin on March 26. Indicate on your check or payment that your intent is for OGHS. Thank you.

Save the Date Vacation Bible School July 10-13 (9 to noon)

K5 through 5th graders welcome;
older youth/adult helpers needed

Contact the church office for more information.

Parent to Parent The WHY, continued: It's hard to be a solo Christian



So far, in this column, I've written twice about the WHY Tim and I persistently involved our three offspring in the "life of the church"—about how a church home is the only place that exposes kids to the Christian tradition, and about how growing up in a church home creates a foundation that as an adult, a person can always return to or build upon. Today's reflection touches on a third reason: **It's darned hard to be a "solo Christian."**

It's certainly possible to teach one's children the Christian story at home, and to teach and model Christian ethics and values apart from a church community. But have you noticed how challenging it is to put the Christian life into practice for yourself? Jesus' life of love and service makes demands on us that aren't always easy to fulfill! It's often tempting to default to centering one's life around one's own needs and wants, especially when all around us such messages are blaring.

I have personally found that regular involvement in a church home repeatedly reminds me of what it means to "walk the talk." How does this happen? It happens in worship when I hear the sermon—or consider who and what we pray for. It happens when I hear of the many projects my fellow congregants are involved with. It happens when I engage my Union brothers and sisters in conversation. All of this helps keep me accountable and inspires me when I'm tempted to "check out" and just tend to myself.

So if it's hard for me to keep that focus, how much harder is it for a child whose life-philosophy and moral compass are still unformed? Exposing Jim, Jenna, and Mark to the life of the church kept those values "in their face," week after week, month after month, year after year. It not only gave them a model of a life different from what they often encountered "in the world," but it also validated what Tim and I were teaching them at home; they could see that Jesus' values were taken seriously by others besides their weirdo parents.

In short, WE found it difficult to be "solo Christians," so we didn't want to ask that of our kids, either.

—Julie Harder

Parent to Parent happenings:

The next opportunity to share with other parents will be Sunday, February 12 at 9:00 a.m. in the Chapel Classroom.

Check out our Facebook page, and please consider sharing your thoughts!

*Please note: The name of the Facebook page has changed to
"Parent to Parent – Union UCC Green Bay"*



Moderator Lou Norsetter conducts business.



Julie Harder



Sue Exworthy

Union Church's
181st Annual Meeting
convened on Sunday, January 29
after worship

“Living the Questions”

All are welcome to join in this lively video and discussion series at any time. If you have questions about your beliefs or if you would like to engage with others about meaty topics of faith, consider participating in “Living the Questions.” Our next meetings are at the home of Clay and Christie Reese from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on February 9 and February 23. Childcare is provided.

**Sign up at Union Central
or with the church office.**

Love, Listen, and Limits

Sundays from 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. in the Bagby Chapel
February 5 . . . February 19 . . . February 26

This series is for anyone who interacts with children ages two to 12: parents, grandparents, teachers, caregivers, babysitters, etc. This skill-building program offers tools to deal with behaviors of normal children. Cyndi Pagel has worked with children and families since 1980. Throughout her career, she has provided parenting classes and family support with children’s behaviors.

**Sign-up in Union Central
or contact Deb Rose: 347-4976**



at **Union Church (Pilgrim Hall)**

March 11 (noon to 3 p.m.)

\$5 members
\$10 nonmembers

sponsored
by:



Questions?
email Lloyd Schaefer at
lschaefer3@new.rr.com

Ecumenical Partnership for Housing (EPH) News

Ten years ago the majority of the families EPH served were “lower-barrier” families. With low-barrier families, homelessness was generally caused by a sudden crisis or single event such as a job loss, a divorce, a medical crisis, or an incident of domestic violence. Low-barrier families know what it is like to be self-sufficient. With guidance and support, these families have a fairly direct path back to self-sufficiency.

Last year 80% of our families were “high-barrier” families, families with a parent or parents who lived in poverty as a child. High-barrier families often have not been exposed to the basic life skills many of us take for granted; they have not experienced self-sufficiency and often can’t picture a life of independence. The path to self-sufficiency often looks more like a zig-zag rather than a relatively direct path.

Geri, a mother in one of our homes, lived in poverty as a child. Typical of many high-barrier families, she is simultaneously working on multiple goals. She is studying hard for her GED (with a mentor), attending parenting classes, attending budget counseling (with Catholic Charities), all while receiving guidance and support from her Salvation Army case manager. Geri’s path to self-sufficiency has been a zig zag – two steps forward, one step back – but we celebrate her well-being and continued progress.

Union’s 12th Night Celebration was January 6



photos by Tom Towill

Union Church Calendar

February 5, 2017—March 5, 2017

February 5 Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Education:
Love, Listen and Limits
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
- 11:15 a.m. Confirmation

February 7 Tuesday

- 1:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 4:30 p.m. Outreach Ministry
- 5:00 p.m. New Member Ministry
- 5:30 p.m. Worship Ministry
- 6:30 p.m. Education Ministry

February 8 Wednesday

- 4:55 p.m. Youth Choir
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. PF & YCA
- 6:15 p.m. Seminary Secrets

February 9 Thursday

- 5:30 p.m. Handbells
- 6:30 p.m. Advocacy Team
- 6:30 p.m. "Living the Questions"
- 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

February 12 Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Parent to Parent
- 9:00 a.m. Second Sunday Series:
Paul Wilmet, Songwriter
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
- 10:30 a.m. Confirmation

February 14 Tuesday

- 1:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 5:00 p.m. Stewardship Ministry
- 5:30 p.m. Inreach Ministry
- 6:30 p.m. Common Ministry
- 6:30 p.m. Adult Gay-Straight
Alliance

February 15 Wednesday

- 4:55 p.m. Youth Choir
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. PF & YCA
- 6:30 p.m. Union Church Book Group

February 16 Thursday

- 5:30 p.m. Handbells
- 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

February 19 Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Education:
Love, Listen and Limits
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
- 11:15 a.m. Confirmation

February 20 Monday

- 7:00 p.m. Search Committee

February 21 Tuesday

- SPRING PRIMARY ELECTION
- 1:00 p.m. Bible Study

February 22 Wednesday

- 4:55 p.m. Youth Choir
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. PF & YCA
- 6:15 p.m. Seminary Secrets

February 23 Thursday

- 5:30 p.m. Handbells
- 6:30 p.m. "Living the Questions"
- 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

February 26 Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Education:
Love, Listen and Limits
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
- 11:15 a.m. Confirmation

February 28 Tuesday

- 1:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 1:00 p.m. Priscilla Circle

March 1 Wednesday

- 4:55 p.m. Youth Choir
- 5:45 p.m. Dinner
- 6:15 p.m. PF & YCA
- 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Worship

March 2 Thursday

- 5:30 p.m. Handbells
- 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir

March 5 Sunday

- 9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
- 9:00 a.m. Adult Education:
Becoming Welcoming
Communities
- 10:00 a.m. Worship in the sanctuary
- 11:15 a.m. Confirmation

Second Sunday Series

9 a.m. February 12



Paul Wilmet

Singing and Songwriting

Union Church's own Paul Wilmet moved to Nashville for several years where he lived as a singer-songwriter. Come hear about his time in Nashville, his music making process, and his advocacy in the recovery community.



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

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Are You Interested in Learning More About Union Church?



On Thursday, April 6 and Wednesday, April 19, our New Member Ministry will host Inquirers Classes for those who are interested in knowing more about Union Church and membership. On April 6, we will meet in the English Room of the church at 7:00 p.m. Refreshments will be provided. On April 19, we will meet in Pilgrim Hall at 5:30 p.m. for dinner with the Union Church youth groups, adjourning to the English Room for the balance of our time together.

These classes are a way to introduce those interested in Union Church to who we are and what we believe – as Christians, as the United Church of Christ, and as a part of Union Church. If you need child care, please call the church office (437-9266). We will conclude by 8:30 p.m. on the 6th and by 7:30 p.m. on the 19th. On Sunday, April 30, we will receive those who choose to covenant with our congregation into membership.

For further information or to sign up, please call the church office.

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

Steven B. Hartman

Pastor of Visitation

Sandy Polarek

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>