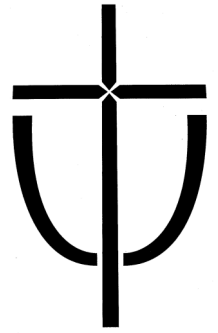


Still Speaking



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

November 2020

The Inside Scoop

Newsletter Deadline

*Our next newsletter will be published the week of **December 16, 2020.***

*The deadline for that newsletter is Friday, **December 11, 2020.***

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The Brain Center is Growing!

It's tempting, in the newsletter after an election, to focus attention there. But frankly, there's too much uncertainty, angst, and division. We'll let the politics simmer for a while—meanwhile praying earnestly for our country.

In times of struggle and uncertainty, it's nice to know that some things are not only working out, but that they are actually moving forward! That's the case with the Brain Center of Green Bay—our tenant in the refurbished incubator space downstairs (the former youth room).

When I interviewed for my current position at Union, Dr. Rolf Luloff said to me: "I have a start-up in mind, and I think you can help."

Rolf's vision for the Brain Center, and the hard work of many, has now led to an agency with an annual budget of \$200,000. We have a staff—Executive



Director, Chris Vanden Hoogen (pictured here), and an Office and Communications Manager, Kelsey O'Donnell-Mauthe. They are hard at work to get the word out about The Brain Center of Green Bay. We have two interns (one from UWGB and one from NWTC), and a board of 12. It's a high-powered group with potential to make a significant positive impact in Green Bay—doctors, a lawyer, an accountant, business leaders, a professor of business, and health care administrators.

What do we do? Our vision is that "Every person will enjoy optimal brain health throughout life." The way we aim to do that here in Green Bay is by educating, advising, and advocating for people who are struggling with Neuro-Degenerative Diseases (NDD) like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and others. So, if you or a loved one are dealing with one of the forms of NDD, or if you know someone who is, please reach out. We have "coaches" in place who can walk



(continued on page 2)

Lectionary Readings**November 15****24th Sunday after Pentecost**

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

November 22**Reign of Christ**

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

November 26**Thanksgiving Day**

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

November 29**1st Sunday of Advent**

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

December 6**2nd Sunday of Advent**

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

December 13**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 20**4th Sunday of Advent**

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

Our Church Family*(continued from page 1)*

alongside you, or your loved one, connecting you to local services and information that are available that you might not be aware of. You can send an email to: info@braincentergb.org or call the center at 920-393-4080.

Check out the Brain Center's webpage (<https://www.braincentergb.org/>) where you can discover community services available, programs, educational events, literature, and how to get together with a "coach" through a consultation. There's a "Brain Blog" with brain-healthy recipes, exercise suggestions, reading materials related to brain health (like a Parents Guide to Helping Children and Teens Understand Alzheimer's Disease.) And, of course, the agency welcomes donations—and is beginning to engage volunteers.

To be clear: The Brain Center of Green Bay is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit. But this growing agency that will bring better health to our region is the fruit of your vision and labor, Union friend. We have birthed a new ministry of mercy and compassion in the lower level of our church.

And whatever is going on with COVID-19, or the election, that's a wonderful new step in Union's history as a "start-up church." Can I get an Amen?

In Christ,

Jon Pahl, Ph.D., Minister of Faith Formation and Community Engagement

Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale

Thanks to everyone who has already helped plan for this year's Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale. The sale begins Friday, November 20, and we need your help to make it successful.

Christmas Tree Lot Staffing

We really need your help staffing the lot! With folks spending more time at home, this should be a great year for tree and wreath sales. We've moved the lot closer to the building (near the Blessing Box) so staffers should be able to be warmer and drier than in years past!

What we need you to do:

- Tell friends, neighbors, and family about the lot, with fresh local trees and wreaths. The lot at 716 S. Madison Street is open Fridays (4 to 6 p.m.), Saturdays (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.), and Sundays (noon to 4 p.m.).
- Sign up to work a 2-hour shift through our Friday and special Monday email blasts. Click on the included link and type your name in the time slot you're able to help. The sign-up sheet updates itself in real time. There's no need to "save," as it does that on its own. If you're uncomfortable signing up online, you can call the church office between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. (M-F) and we will help sign you up!

When you arrive for your shift, a member of the planning team will greet you and give you a brief orientation. It's as simple as that!

Wreath Decorating

We will be selling 85 wreaths and we need your help in decorating them. The decorating will take place in Pilgrim Hall to allow for social distancing. Please join the fun on Saturday, November 14 starting at 9 a.m. You can also decorate during office hours if you wish. Bows and other decorations will be provided.

Advent and Christmas at a Glance



All services are available at unionucc.com or on our Facebook page.

Sunday, November 29

First Sunday of Advent

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

Sunday, December 6

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 13

Third Sunday of Advent

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

Sunday, December 20

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.

Monday, December 21

Longest Night Service at 7 p.m.

This is a time to pause amid the holiday season and to acknowledge the difficult feelings and emotions that can creep in. It also reminds us of Emmanuel, God With Us, as we long for the hope Jesus' birth promises.

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve (see back page for more details)

8:40 p.m. — **The Music of Christmas**

9:00 p.m. — **A Service of Lessons and Carols**

Join us via Facebook Live or on our website. Additionally, all who are interested are invited to our Drive-In Christmas Eve Celebration! Gather together in the Associated Bank parking lot at the corner of Elm and Madison Streets to watch the service on a giant video wall!





Your Church Library

by Cathy Putman

New Books in the Church Library

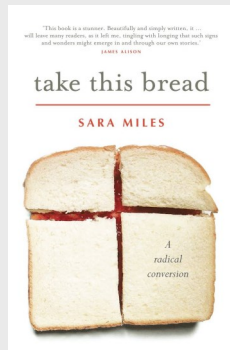
Sara Miles is a former restaurant worker and war journalist who vividly experienced in her first communion the body of Jesus. Raised in a fiercely secular home, she was wracked by a celebratory realness of this mystical meal and a fear of becoming a religious nut. "Take this Bread" is her reflection on what it meant to fulfill Jesus's direction to "feed my sheep." Despite the skepticism of her progressive congregation, she made a food pantry around the beautiful and expensively made communion table in the Byzantine style sanctuary of St. Gregory of Nyssa in San Francisco.

Her restaurant experience taught her the cohesion of shared physical labor and value of serving. Through probing clergy interviews and recollecting her time in war-torn Latin America, she forms a theology attuned to the pantry's new found community, a church which acts and heals.

In time, the volunteer group, composed mostly of pantry regulars, gathers for a meal at the end of their work day. For those who can see it, this is an enactment of the Feeding of the Five Thousand followed by the Last Supper.

The feeding story appears often: in folklore with "Stone Soup," in the Talmudic story retold in "A Hen for Izzy Pippik," in the wartime experience recalled in "Gleam and Glow," to name a few. We have the beginnings of such a story in our Blessing Box and in our NEW Community Shelter meal. What Sara Miles teaches us is the extension of that charity into our life with God.

All books mentioned by name
can be found in the basket
under the window in the church library.



UCC Community of Discernment Begins November 16

"God is still speaking!" That is not only a mantra of the United Church of Christ, but a heartfelt conviction of Catholic theologian Henri Nouwen.

As UCC members, we would heartily agree.

Nouwen's book, Discernment: Reading the Signs of Daily Life, provides insights and guided questioning into hearing God's voice in our lives. Discernment many times focuses on career choices for those seeking leadership ministry positions. Henri Nouwen acknowledges that, but takes this much further as a means of identifying when God is indeed speaking to us. Discernment considers three fundamental considerations: 1) What is discernment? 2) Discerning guidance in books, nature, people, and events. 3) Discerning vocation, presence, identity, and time.

Each chapter contains insights into how a community may better discern the divine in every day experiences. The book poses introspective questions at the end of each chapter that fosters personal journaling and group discussion.

I invite members of your congregation to participate in a 10-week community of discernment, focusing on hearing the voice of God. I seek participation from First Congregational UCC, First UCC, and Union Congregational UCC. This provides the group with a cooperative effort among our local churches as well as diversity in outlook. We would hold our sessions via Zoom every Monday at 4 p.m. starting November 16. We would break over the Christmas holidays, resuming in January, completing the session on February 1.

In order to promote community discussion, we need to limit participation for 3-4 members per congregation on average. A group of 12 total will allow ample time for discussion among participants, even if the membership is not precisely even among congregations.

The sessions are free. The cost of the book is \$10.99 on Amazon Prime (\$6.99 – Kindle version); list price is \$17.99. The local library does NOT have copies, but church libraries may. Scholarships are available for those needing assistance. Participants need a device that allows connection to a Zoom group meetings (computer, laptop, I-phone or I-pad, etc.).

Those who are interested may call Lou Ann Norsetter (217-1911) or email her (LNorset0629@gmail.com). Whether you want to sign up or just have questions, please feel free to contact me. You may also call the church office (437-9266) to sign up. I look forward to hearing from you.

—Lou Norsetter

Sculpted Beauty in the Memorial Garden

A new tree has put down roots in Union Church's Memorial Garden.

The garden, located outside the southwest corner of the church building, has always been picturesque in its beauty. Giant allium, lamiastrium and more are sprinkled throughout the idyllic retreat.

In late October, a tree unlike any other joined the saucer magnolia, cedars and cherry tree there. Barbara Koller commissioned artist Miles Amorelli to create the unique addition.

"He (Miles) has the skill of looking at a space and with a few ideas from us would come up with a sculpture that was not only functional but would become a piece of art," Barbara wrote in an email.

The work of art took roughly three months to complete. As with everything he does, Miles used recycled materials.

Miles refers to his latest work as arbor vitae. "It keeps on growing and never dies."

Barbara's late husband, the Rev. Robert Koller, developed a close relationship with Miles over the years as the artist crafted a number of items for the couple's backyard. When Robert passed away in January, Barbara had an idea.

"It wasn't till Robert's passing and he was interred in the Memorial Garden that it occurred to me that, why not bring some of the joy that we experienced from our own garden to the Memorial Garden."

The sculpture sits roughly in the center of the garden. Its leaves match the color of the large stained glass window on the west side of the building.

"Robert was always focused on promoting the welfare of others, so I know he would approve of this gift to the church," Barbara explained. "Not as a memorial to him personally, but a gift to be shared with all members and their loved ones."

Established in 2001, the garden is a site for members and friends of Union to inter cremated remains or erect a wall plaque in honor of an individual.



Miles Amorelli's sculpture

Adult Education

We'll gather at 9 a.m. via Zoom. The link will be available in This Week at Union.

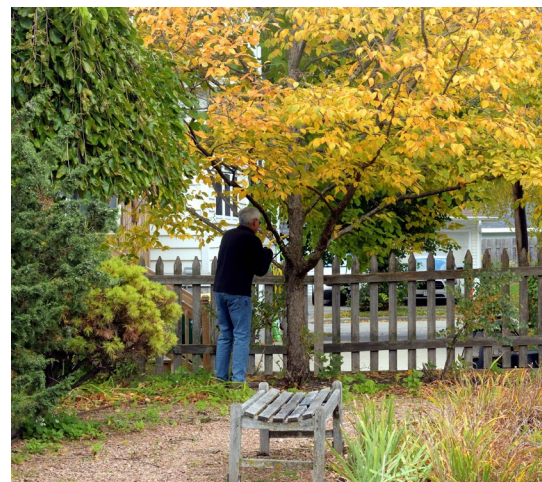
November 22: What is Heifer?

Dr. Jon Pahl will introduce (and deepen) our understanding of why Union has partnered with Heifer, International for so many years. November 22 is Heifer Sunday, with a special sermon.

November 29: NO ADULT EDUCATION

December 6, 13, 20: Book Discussion

Dr. Jon Pahl and Jill Thiede will lead a discussion of the recent book by John Pavlovitz, "LOW: AN HONEST ADVENT DEVOTIONAL." The book is a daily set of meditations to prepare for Christmas, organized in four weeks, and we'll discuss insights for the season. Pavlovitz has earned a reputation as an insightful and progressive Christian voice, including work on anti-racism. The book is readily available for \$5.99. We hope you'll join us!



Achim Seifert trims the ironwood trees in the Biblical Garden in an overdue refreshing of the space first imagined in 1998. Replanting, new paths and repurposed uses are all items under discussion by the Revamp and Revisioning Team.

George’s Secret Elves

This year, rather than collecting items, we are collecting monetary donations for George’s Secret Elves. Your donations will go to help with providing lunches for children at home during the day. It may also help with other projects of George’s Secret Elves, such as care baskets for local teens and veterans. You can send a check to the church office (made out to Union Congregational UCC; George’s Secret Elves in the memo). We will collect donations through Tuesday, December 1.

Ways to Give Thanks

Gathered in Faith Together is planning a "Many Ways to Give Thanks" event via Zoom, focused on the topic of gratitude across faith traditions, sponsored by the Mauthe Center on November 19, at 6 p.m. Also, a Giving Thanks Service at 7 p.m. on November 24 will be available on our website and Facebook, just like our Sunday worship.

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 16. 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 Winnie Hutjens at finance@unionucc.com.

Christmas Altar

We still plan to prepare the sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas seasons. A small number of poinsettias, the average cost of which is \$20, will be purchased to provide environment for our recording. If you wish to contribute, please fill out the order form below and return it to the church office or email the pertinent information to the church office by December 9. Plants will be available for pickup or delivery on December 18.

Poinsettia Contribution

I/we would like to contribute for poinsettias

Name(s) _____

Phone _____ Amt. Enclosed _____

Dedication for the Bulletin

**Stock the Blessing Box — Saturday, December 5
9 a.m. to Noon
Madison Street Entrance (look for the Blessing Box)**

Christmas Fund Offering is December 13

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!

Union Church Calendar

November 15, 2020—December 16, 2020

(All meetings online unless otherwise noted. Watch your email for links and contact us at office@unionucc.com to be added to our email list.)

November 15 Sunday

Rev. Lenny Duncan Preaches

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
NO ADULT EDUCATION
10:00 a.m. Worship

November 16 Monday

4:00 p.m. Discernment Community
6:30 p.m. Music Conversation

November 17 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study
5:30 p.m. Bell Choir (in person)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

November 18 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups

November 19 Thursday

6:00 p.m. Mauthe Center Interfaith
Zoom re: Giving Thanks

November 20 Friday

4:00 p.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 6 p.m.

November 21 Saturday

10:00 a.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 6 p.m.

November 22 Heifer Sunday

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: "Heifer"
10:00 a.m. Worship
12:00 p.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 4 p.m.

November 23 Monday

4:00 p.m. Discernment Community

November 24 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study
3:30 p.m. Bell Choir (in person)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)
7:00 p.m. Giving Thanks Service
on Union's website and
our Facebook page

November 25 Wednesday

NO YOUTH GROUPS

November 26 Thursday

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED

November 27 Friday

CHURCH OFFICE IS CLOSED
4:00 p.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 6 p.m.

November 28 Saturday

10:00 a.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 6 p.m.

November 29 1st Sunday of Advent

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Advent
Devotional
10:00 a.m. Worship
12:00 p.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 4 p.m.

November 30 Monday

4:00 p.m. Discernment Community

December 1 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study
4:30 p.m. Outreach Ministry
6:30 p.m. Education Ministry
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

December 2 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups

December 4 Friday

4:00 p.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 6 p.m.

December 5 Saturday

9:00 a.m. Stock the Box Drive
10:00 a.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 6 p.m.

December 6 2nd Sunday of Advent

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Advent
Devotional
10:00 a.m. Worship
with Holy Communion
12:00 p.m. Union's Christmas Tree
Lot is open until 4 p.m.

December 7 Monday

4:00 p.m. Discernment Community
5:30 p.m. Worship Ministry

December 8 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study
5:30 p.m. Stewardship Ministry
5:30 p.m. Bell Choir (in person)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

December 9 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups

December 10 Thursday

5:00 p.m. New Members/Inreach
Ministry
6:00 p.m. Common Ministry

December 13 3rd Sunday of Advent Christmas Fund Offering

9:00 a.m. Faith Formation
9:00 a.m. Adult Ed: Advent
Devotional
10:00 a.m. Worship

December 14 Monday

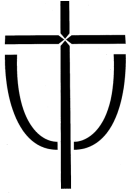
4:00 p.m. Discernment Community

December 15 Tuesday

12:00 p.m. Bible Study
3:00 p.m. Bell Choir (in person)
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir (Zoom)

December 16 Wednesday

6:15 p.m. Youth Groups



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

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GREEN BAY, WI

Join Us For These Special Holiday Services

Longest Night Service — December 21

This year, 2020, has had its share of losses and sadness, and in the season that our culture says is “the most wonderful time of the year,” we understand that some of us may not feel that way. Our Longest Night Service is a time for us to pause amid the holiday season, and to acknowledge the difficult feelings and emotions that can creep in, sometimes even overwhelming us this time of year. It also reminds us of Emmanuel, God With Us, as we long for the hope Jesus’ birth promises us. All are welcome to join in this service to be shared on Monday, December 21 at 7 p.m. via the church website and on Facebook Live.

Christmas Eve Service — December 24

While we will not worship at church this year, we plan to make our celebration of Jesus’ birth special. All are welcome to join in this service to be shared on Thursday, December 24 at 9 p.m. with special music beginning at 8:40 p.m.

- Join us via Facebook Live or on our website.
- Additionally, all who are interested are invited to our **Drive-In Christmas Eve Celebration!** Gather together in the Associated Bank parking lot at the corner of Elm and Madison Streets to watch our Christmas Eve service on a giant video wall! (Space is limited. Watch our church communications to see if an earlier viewing party is added.)

Union Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Rev. Bridget M. Flad Daniels

Senior Minister

Dr. Jon Pahl

Minister of Faith Formation
and Community Engagement

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>