



THE SPIRIT

Of Union Congregational, United Church of Christ

122 East Bennett, Buffalo, Wyoming
Reverend Anne Knighten

January 2022
Church: 307:684-2958



Greetings from Reverend Anne

Dear friends in Christ,

Happy New Year! Time is passing quickly. It is hard to believe that I have been here in Buffalo for three months already. For me, 2021 was an unusual year, and I could not have predicted last January much of what actually occurred. I know that 2022 will be filled with a variety of experiences, with laughter and tears, with the ordinary and the profound, with the expected and the unexpected.

I am not one for making resolutions, largely because I have a history of starting out with high expectations of success and then running out of steam after far too brief a time. But I think I will make an exception this year by offering resolutions that we can all try to keep, not just this year but far into the future. A pastor I met in South Dakota sent out a document entitled "Living and Working Together in Christ's Church" which he provides to members of the church council during their installation. He gave permission to adapt that document for use in our own congregations, which is what I have done here.

Let us resolve:

- To be engaged. To be regular in church attendance. To give of our time, talents, and treasure as we are led by the Holy Spirit, and to encourage others to do likewise, serving as good examples in word and deed.
- To be people of prayer. To pray regularly for one another, especially for those in leadership capacities and those in need. To go to God in thanksgiving, praise, and supplication. To share with God all our concerns and cares, confident that God hears us even when the answer is not what we hoped it might be.
- To be honest. To tell the truth to one another in love. When differences of opinion occur—and they will—to have the courage to express our opinions to one another, and to do so in a manner befitting our relationship as siblings in Christ and children of God. We talk directly with one another and use the systems set forth in Matthew 18:15-20 and our church constitution and bylaws to resolve disputes.
- To hold confidence. When sensitive matters are presented to us, we hold them in strict confidence unless we are given permission to share those matters with others. Please know that as your pastor, anything you say to me, including prayer requests, will be held in confidence unless you tell me otherwise.
- To be forthright. Anonymous letters, notes, complaints, or other statements are inappropriate in Christ's church. Any anonymous letter or note that comes to me as your pastor will be discarded unread. Any member of the congregation is welcome to bring concerns before the council in person, through a signed letter, or verbally through a council member who has been authorized to express that concern and provide that concerned member's name. Anyone is welcome to speak to me about any concern involving the congregation. However, if a statement is made such as "people are saying," please know that if those people cannot be named, then it is inappropriate for us to speak about that matter.

- To be joyful. We are the Family of God—to what better family could we belong? As family members, we will be spending time together over the coming year(s), in various ways: in worship, in fellowship, in service, in study, in recreation. I want to hear your stories; I already know that there are wonderful storytellers among us. I want us to get to know each other better—even people who have known each other for years can find new things to learn about each other. Let us find joy in our relationships as we live together as a faith community, and let that joy overflow as we serve one another, the people of Buffalo, and the wider world.

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Anne

Office Hours

Regular office hours for Reverend Anne at Union Congregational are a moving target in this busy season for both Union Congregational and St. Luke's Lutheran Churches. Please feel free to contact Reverend Anne at anne.knighten@gmail.com or 951-529-2088 or 307-684-2958 if you would like to set up an office visit.

UCC Administrative Contacts: To contact the Church Council, please call Ron McPhee, Moderator, at 307-217-1456. To contact the Church Secretary/Clerk, call Kathleen McPhee at 307-217-1455.

THE MISSION OF UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

*In Jesus' name, Worship God, Study Scripture,
Joyfully Help those in need*

Moderator's Report

Happy New Year!

Pastor Anne's message in this Newsletter sets the perfect tone for our church year in 2022. If we all strive to uphold these goals for the next 365 days, we will have a successful year!

Our Congregational Annual Meeting will be held January 30 following Worship Service. Would all Committee Chairs email their annual committee reports to Kathleen at mcphee@vcn.com at your earliest convenience. The collection of annual reports each year is important for the congregation to be aware of the accomplishments of our very competent committees, as well as providing a historical record of Union Congregational.

Thank you all who joined with the American Legion and St. Luke's Lutheran to provide Christmas Dinner for 45 recipients of Meals on Wheels delivered and 65 members of our community who joined in fellowship to enjoy Christmas Dinner at the American Legion Hall. We had members who donated food, others helped assemble the meals and others who delivered the meals. This community service is much appreciated.

Ron McPhee, Moderator

January Sunday Worship Schedule:



January 2, 2022 – First Sunday after Christmas (Epiphany)

First Scripture Reading: **Isaiah 60:1-4**

Responsive Reading: **Psalms 72:1-4, 10-14**

Second Scripture Reading: **Ephesians 3:1-12**

Gospel Reading: **Matthew 2:1-12**

January 9, 2022 - First Sunday After Epiphany

First Scripture Reading: **Isaiah 43:1-7**
Responsive Reading: **Psalm 29**
Second Scripture Reading: **Act 8:1-4**
Gospel Reading: **Luke 3:15-17, 21-22**

January 16, 2022 – Second Sunday after Epiphany

First Scripture Reading: **Isaiah 62:1-5**
Responsive Reading: **Psalm 36:5-10**
Second Scripture Reading: **I Corinthians 12:1-11**
Gospel Reading: **John 2:1-11**

January 23, 2022 - Third Sunday after Epiphany

First Scripture Reading: **Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10**
Reading of the Psalm: **Psalm 19**
Second Scripture Reading: **I Corinthians 12:12-31a**
Gospel Reading: **Luke 4:14-21**

January 30, 2022 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

First Scripture Reading: **Jeremiah 1:4-10**
Reading of the Psalm: **Psalm 71:1-6**
Second Scripture Reading: **I Corinthians 13:1-13**
Gospel Reading: **Luke 4:21-30**



No UCC birthdays in January



**ANNIVERSARIES
THIS MONTH**

No UCC Anniversaries in January

What's Happening at Union Congregational in January?

- ✚ Men's Breakfast, Wednesday, January 5, 8 a.m.; St. Luke's Lutheran
- ✚ UCC Women's Fellowship, Wednesday, January 5, 1:30 p.m.
- ✚ Prayer Shawl Ministry, Thursdays, 1 p.m., St. Luke's Lutheran
- ✚ Council Meeting, Tuesday, January 11, at 2 p.m.
- ✚ UCC Bible Study, Thursdays at 10 a.m., starting mid-January, by Zoom and in-person at UCC Conference Room
- ✚ St. Luke's Bible Study, every Tuesday, 10 a.m.
- ✚ AA meets every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday at noon to 1 p.m.;
- ✚ AlAnon meets every Monday, 7 p.m.
- ✚ TOPS meets at 8 a.m. every Thursday morning



**REMEMBER THE PRAYER SHAWL
MINISTRY Thursdays, 1:00 p.m.**

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets at 1:00 p.m. on the first Thursdays of every month at **St. Luke's Lutheran Church**. If you can knit or crochet—or want to learn how—or can tie on

fringe, we need you. Contact Reverend Anne if you have any questions.

Mission Committee

Union Congregational arranged for one free meal ticket to be given to Meals on Wheels recipients on Christmas Day.

Union Congregational provided gifts donated by the congregation to our new Adopted family, a single mother with one child. In addition, ½ of the collection at the Christmas Eve Service was given to the Adopted Family.

One-half of the collection at the Christmas Eve Service was donated to the Veterans of the Cross Christmas Fund, a national mission supported by the Conference.

UCC joined with the American Legion and St. Luke's Lutheran in cooking and providing Christmas Dinner on Christmas Day for 45 Meals on Wheels recipients as well as a meal at the American Legion Hall for 65 community members who would otherwise have been alone on Christmas Day.

Worship Committee

A candlelight Christmas Eve Service of scriptures and Christmas carols was held on December 24th at 7 p.m. We were delighted to have 15 members attending.

Updates to Prayer Chain:

- Dick Reiman has recuperated sufficiently to attend Christmas Eve Service.
- Please pray for Scott, Pastor Anne's husband, who had gallstone surgery in December and is finding rapid recovery more difficult than expected.
- Please pray for Karen Klaahsen who is struggling with health concerns.
- Please pray for Ryan Lofgren who is also struggling for health answers.
- Please pray for Alaine Watson, daughter of Shirley Jacob, who is hospitalized in Casper with Covid and threatened with renal failure and oxygen deficiency.

Thanks to everyone for keeping the prayer chains going.



November 7, 2021 – Church Council Minutes (excerpts)

© Can Stock Photo

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Ron. Present were Reverend Anne Knighten and Council members: Ron McPhee, Larry Gerard, Deane Bjerke, Don Scantling, Barb Millett, Judy Firnekas and church secretary, Kathleen McPhee. The meeting was opened with prayer by Reverend Anne.

Minutes of the October 12 Council meeting were approved unanimously. The Treasurer's Report was also accepted. It was noted that \$10,000 from the Hayfield Memorial account was transferred to cover normal monthly bills.

A draft Budget for 2022 was distributed to the Council. Council asked that Capital Improvements for 2022 be increased to \$40,000 for paving the church parking lot and providing a new furnace system in the parsonage. A revised budget will be discussed at the December Council meeting.

Reverend Anne is pleased with the services and activities of UCC and St. Luke's congregations. St. Luke's is starting a book Bible Study on "Heaven" led by Karen Klaahsen at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays. UCC is invited to attend.

Reverend Anne plans to lead an Advent Bible Study at UCC.

Reverend Anne is on the rotation for worship services at Amie Holt Care Center. She may bring four attendees to assist with singing, etc. and invites members of our congregation to attend.

The Buffalo Ministerial Association is reinstating regular meetings. Reverend Anne will host the December meeting at St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

She would also like to institute a "Blue Christmas" gathering for those grieving for lost loved ones and those dealing with other difficulties in 2021.

Reverend Anne will be masked and will sanitize her hands prior to Communion services for the protection of the congregation.

The carpentry on the parsonage stairwell is completed and the access problems to the second floor have been resolved.

Reverend Anne asked for names of individuals who may want home visits and perhaps communion.

Two individuals have approached Reverend Anne about joining our church and she will be conducting a new member class.

Reverend Anne has visited the Senior Center to explore volunteer opportunities there. She has been instrumental in starting a group meeting at the Mountain Meadow Wool in Buffalo for companionship and using wool products. Reverend Anne also suggests joining the Buffalo Chamber and perhaps St. Luke's and UCC can combine one membership.

Buildings and Grounds. There is still no heat in the upstairs in the Parsonage pending inspection of the furnace for leaks. Larry will arrange for the inspection.

Alpine Construction will be asked to look at the ramp leading up to the Council Room for repairs/replacement.

Mission Committee: UCC has a new Adopted Family for the 12/1/2021 through 11/30/2022 year and the congregation will be providing gifts to this Family.

Worship Committee: The Worship Committee has met with Reverend Anne to discuss the music program and Advent activities. The All Saints Day service was impressive and started a new tradition of ringing the church bell once after each name is read.

Old Business:

The internet service has been upgraded and a booster installed in the parsonage. A direct ethernet cable will need to be run across to the parsonage to make the internet service truly acceptable there.

New Business:

St. Luke's Children's program will be December 19th and the bell choir will participate in the program. UCC is invited to attend.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.



Please send committee reports and articles to be published in The Spirit to ucucc@vcn.com or to mcphee@vcn.com by the 24th of each month to allow us to get our newsletter out by the 1st of each month. Thanks!

Established October 12, 1884, Union Congregational Church has continuously served God, our parishioners, and the community from the days before the Johnson County Cattle War to the present time. The church looks forward to being of ever-increasing service in the future.

Union Congregational Church History Corner



Excerpts from a History written in 1959 of the *International C.E. Convention in 1905* by Otto Hart, elected delegate to the Convention.

(A continuation of Otto Hart's attendance at the International C. E. Convention held in the City of Baltimore during the summer of 1905) The convention was held in the 5th Regional Armory which covers an entire block and the choir had 2500 voices.

Wyoming, having increased its membership in C.E. by 23% that year won a banner, and since Buffalo's delegate was the only representative Wyoming had there, when Wyoming was called, he mounted a chair, waved the state banner and shouted something. The International Secretary spotted him and as soon as that session was dismissed, he thrust a message in Otto Hart's hand and said, "Please deliver this to your minister when you get home."

A correspondence developed between them which resulted in the Secretary spending his summer vacation in the Big Horn Mountains in Rev. Stillman's summer home. During his stay here that summer, he visited the A. I. Brock ranch and got to shoot a sage hen on the wing. That was the highlight of his trip. His first wing shot and also his first sage chicken. After he left here he wrote up quite a story about this country in an eastern paper using Rev. Stillman's daughter Ruth (He called her "Starke" sometimes; at other times "Sun Shine.") and an old mountain man George Mattox as his principal characters in the story.

The banner the delegate brought back from Baltimore hung on this church wall for a long time.

THE UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
122 East Bennett Street; P. O. Box 889
Buffalo, WY 82834

The Spirit

Of Union Congregational Church

