



THE SPIRIT

Of Union Congregational, United Church of Christ

122 East Bennett, Buffalo, Wyoming

Reverend Anne Knighten

July 2022

Church: 307-684-2958



Greetings from Pastor Anne

Dear friends in Christ,

We continue walking with Jesus through the gospel of Luke, learning and growing in our call to be disciples. We hear about Jesus' radical call to orient ourselves in accordance with God's will, wherever that may lead us. Our gospel lessons for this month are taken from Chapters 10, 11, and 12 of Luke.

Chapter 10 begins with Jesus sending out his followers two by two to go ahead of him to the places where he planned to travel. He instructed them to travel lightly and to be so focused that they did not stop to greet anyone along the way. Once they arrived at their destination, they were to enter a house and say, "Peace to this house." Then they were to get to work healing and proclaiming that the kingdom of God has come near. They were to expect hospitality and, if the town did not welcome them, they were to shake its dust off their feet in protest.

Further in Chapter 10, we come to one of the most famous of Jesus' parables, the one usually titled "The Parable of the Good Samaritan." It is a story that challenges and expands the definition of "neighbor." The ends with Jesus visiting the home of Martha and Mary, who both welcome them in their own way. But what sort of welcome is Jesus seeking, and which one provides it? We should pause and reflect on the worries and distractions that may provide obstacles to our authentic discipleship and our ability to welcome Jesus into our own lives.

Our lives as disciples must be shaped by prayer. In Chapter 11, one of Jesus' disciples asks Jesus to teach them how to pray, just as John the Baptist had taught his disciples how to pray. Jesus tells them to pray in a way no teacher had ever previously taught, beginning by referring to God as "Father," praising the holiness of God's name, asking for the coming of God's kingdom, petitioning for one's needs, and seeking God's forgiveness just as we forgive others. He then describes the need to be persistent in prayer, recognizing both that persistence nurtures our relationship with God and enables us to recognize God's expansive goodness.

We end the month with one parable from Chapter 12 sometimes titled, "The Parable of the Rich Fool." It asks us to look at the things we treasure, to see whether we have spent our lives foolishly gathering up riches for ourselves rather than spending our efforts on the things of God. The fool wishes to eat, drink, and be merry, delighting in his wealth and taking no account of God in his plans. Compare the "rich fool" and the "good Samaritan." The kingdom of God is one where things are turned upside down.

As we travel with Jesus this month, consider how these readings speak to you. How are you called to respond to their messages of hospitality, persistence in prayer, and seeking to live in accordance with God's plans? How can we better welcome both friends and strangers that

we encounter? How do we develop a better relationship with God through prayer, and how can we be persistent when our prayers seem unanswered? How does our relationship with our possessions proclaim our understanding of God and God's plans?

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Anne

Office Hours

Regular office hours for Pastor Anne at Union Congregational are a moving target for both Union Congregational and St. Luke's Lutheran Churches. Please feel free to contact Pastor Anne at buffalo.rev@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.

UCC Church Council Members: Ron McPhee, Moderator; Judy Firnekas, Vice-Moderator; Kathleen McPhee, Treasurer; Deane Bjerke, Barb Millett, Don Scantling, Larry Gerard

THE MISSION OF UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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

Moderator's Report

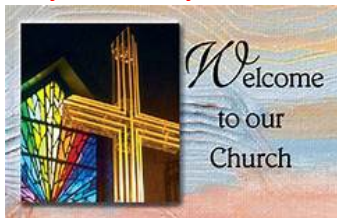
Union Congregational is well into the summer season, with some groups taking a break to accommodate vacations and busy schedules, with other groups continuing to meet and pursue projects. However our congregation never fails to stay in touch by coming together for worship services every Sunday.

We look forward to watching the progress of Women's Fellowship as they pursue their ambitious summer project of cleaning, organizing and updating the Fellowship Room and adjoining rooms in the basement.

Remembering the 4th of July: The United States will be celebrating the birth of our nation this month on July 4. News feeds report the growing frustration of our citizens and signs of lack of patriotism. In these days of turmoil and brutal war affecting all countries in the world, let's remember to seek guidance by asking God to Bless America and our World.

Ron McPhee, Moderator

July Sunday Worship Schedule:



July 3, 2022 – Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

First Scripture Reading: **Isaiah 66:10-14**

Responsive Reading: **Psalm 66:1-9**

Second Scripture Reading: **Galatians 6:7-16**

Gospel Reading: **Luke 10:1-11, 16-20**

July 10, 2022 - Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

First Scripture Reading: **Deuteronomy 30: 9-14**

Responsive Reading: **Psalm 25: 1-10**

Second Scripture Reading: **Colossians 1: 1-14**

Gospel Reading: **Luke 10:25-37**

July 17, 2022 – Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

First Scripture Reading: **Genesis 18: 1-10**

Responsive Reading: ***Psalms 15***

Second Scripture Reading: **Colossians 1:15-28**

Gospel Reading: **Luke 10:38-42**

July 24, 2022 - Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

First Scripture Reading: **Genesis 18-20-32**

Responsive Reading: ***Psalm 138***

Second Scripture Reading: **Colossians 2: 6-15, 16-19**

Gospel Reading: **Luke 11: 1-13**

July 31, 2022 - Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

First Scripture Reading: **Ecclesiastes 1: 2, 2:18-23**

Responsive Reading: ***Psalm 49: 1-12***

Second Scripture Reading: **Colossians 3: 1-11**

Gospel Reading: **Luke 12:13-21**



Kay McCormick July 31st

ANNIVERSARIES

THIS MONTH

No Anniversaries

What's Happening at Union Congregational in July

- ✚ UCC Women's Fellowship, Wednesday, July 6, 1:30 p.m. – Work Day
- ✚ Council Meeting, Tuesday, July 12, at 2 p.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

Mission Committee

Through our Mission Committee, Union Congregational made donations to the following organizations:

Buffalo Community Outreach

We appreciate your contribution in our efforts to help those in our community that need a "hand up". Your donation will be used in our work. Thank You, Beck A. Spencer.

Friends feeding Friends

Dear our friends at the Union Congregational Church, We are so grateful for your recent donation of \$50. It is kind hearts like yours that keeps our program feeding the kids of Johnson County. The kids THANK YOU! JC-FFF Board.

Jim Gatchell Memorial Museum, Art Museum Mondays

Thank you for your generous donation to support our efforts to raise funds for educational programing at the museum. We greatly appreciate your generosity to the museum's endeavors.
Kelsey McDonnell.

Food Pantry. UCC Volunteers at the Food Pantry in July are Peggy Bjerke and Mary Lett. Thank you, Mary and Peggy!

Meals on Wheels. Union Congregational will be delivering one route for Meals on Wheels recipients during the month of July. We appreciate your help in volunteering to deliver on a Monday, Wednesday or Friday during this month.

Worship Committee

Union Congregational has been blessed to have two musicians come forward to play hymns for worship services during John Egan's absence in June. We sincerely thank Mary Lett and Norm Grams who have provided wonderful music accompaniment for Sunday worship services!

Updates to Prayer Chain:

- Please pray for Jax Jayson Vialpando, and his family..He is Tom Madsen's grandson (great grandson of Lois and Carl) who was born prematurely and is in intensive care after emergency C Section and weighed 4 pounds. .. We pray for strength and hope.
- Please pray for Ginny Hancock who is in the hospital. We ask for comfort and healing. She was admitted yesterday.
- Michael Shea, a friend of Pastor Anne's in California, is currently in a nursing facility. His health continues to fail. Please keep Michael and his wife, Ann, in your prayers.
- Bob Boebinger, also a friend of Pastor Anne's in California, fell twice this week and was unable to get up. The hospital ascertained he has a mild form of Covid which meant no rehab facility could admit him. Please pray for Bob and his wife Lisa as they look for assistance to help her until he is well enough to go to a rehab facility.
- Please pray for Shirley Jacob's son Ryan as he is having bladder cancer surgery. Pray for his speedy recovery and strength for his family
- Please keep Diana Miller in your prayers as she waits for more test results.
- Pastor Anne asks that we continue to pray for Scott and for relief from the constant pain.

Thanks to everyone for keeping the prayer chains going.



May 10, 2022 - Church Council Minutes (excerpts)

The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Anne. Council Members present were Barb Millett, Ron McPhee, Deane Bjerke, Don Scantling, Larry Gerard, Judy Firnekas and Kathleen McPhee.

The Minutes of the April 12 meeting were reviewed and approved. The financial statements for April and the investment accounts as of April 30 were reviewed and approved.

Pastor Anne has spent time in California with Scott as he continues to struggle with illness. She plans to return to California on May 16, returning to Buffalo before Pentecost, the first Sunday in June. Mary Lett and Eric Sack will join Union Congregational during the worship service on Pentecost.

Buildings and Grounds. Great Divide inspected the parsonage furnace and will get a bid to Larry this week for installing a bigger furnace to provide heat and air conditional for both levels of the parsonage. Mike Keller will do the lawn care this summer. Eric also has offered to clean up and mow the second church lot when necessary. The Council briefly discussed the addition of a dog run/kennel about 10' x 12' for Pastor Anne's dogs. The sprinkler system in the parsonage yard is to be turned on for the summer.

Mission Committee: Gifts have been given to the Adopted Family and a donation was given to the Buffalo Ministerial Association.

Worship Committee: The Committee continues to work with the Council to provide pulpit supply for worship services during Pastor Anne's absence. The Committee also has arranged for musicians to fill in during John Egan's extended bike trip.

Old Business: The Council approved a contract with Greg Haas for five hours time to update the internet system and to update Union Congregational's social media.

New Business: Women's Fellowship plans to host a salad luncheon on June 7 for St. Luke's Lutheran and St. Luke's Episcopal women's groups as a celebration of the tremendous response given to support Ukrainian refugees. In addition, UCC's Women's Fellowship's summer project will be to clean, organize and update the Fellowship Room to display the history of Union Congregational as well as making the room an inviting rental venue for gatherings and receptions. A suggested rental price was \$300 for a larger reunion if use of the kitchen were included.

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.

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

The Spirit

Of Union Congregational Church

