

# Union Congregational Church



**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

## E~News

September 2010

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*Union Congregational Church, UCC*  
1118 4th Street  
Elk River, Minnesota 55330  
(763) 441-1203  
fax (763) 241-0964  
[churchoffice@elkriverucc.org](mailto:churchoffice@elkriverucc.org)  
[www.elkriverucc.org](http://www.elkriverucc.org)

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### **September Worship Highlights**

**September 5th** 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 18:1-11; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Philemon 1-21; Luke 14:25-33

*Communion*

**We begin our fall schedule on September 12th.**

**Worship at 8:30am & 10:45am.**

**September 12th** 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28; Psalm 14

1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

**September 19th** 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 8:18-9:1; Psalm 79:1-9

1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

**September 26th** 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 132:1-3a, 6-15; Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16

1 Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31

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### **Pastor's Note**

*Turning leaves: for the first time this summer I saw fall colors at the very top of a tree on Fourth Street. Indeed, the loveliness and evidence of changing season took me by surprise – and also back to the words of a Star Tribune journalist who was musing on how underrated the end of summer really is. I have to say, I too am looking forward to crisp air and wearing socks in my sandals!*

*The summer for me has been rich with good things. First, there was my move into the parsonage. So many thanks to the hands that were part of this transition, and for all of your smiles of affirmation that indeed this is a good thing. Then there was my trip back east, and I am still thanking God for loving family and old friends and stunning beaches. Coming off the church year, and my involvement with the planning group for the MN Conference Annual Meeting, being lifted up by playful waves was just what I needed!*

*Add to this richness, terrific, thoughtful dialogue with members of the Visioning Team. Over these hot months we met with ice tea in hand; and following the congregational meetings in June and the Church Council in July – which approved unanimously our Visioning Statement – the Team began to explore what will best let us meet the ‘ends’ that we as a church have committed to. In other words, what structures of governance will best help us do what we value. While this is a work in progress, by the Annual Meeting in February, 2011, the Team plans to offer suggestions for direction. Of course, all along we will be sharing the process with Church Council, and as always, all are welcome to attend.*

*In the mean time, good things continue! In August we had our second calendar meeting, which consisted of board/committee/team chairs. We shared a meal, and discussed with members of the Visioning Team changing roles and issues of accountability as the new season opens. We envisioned the usual projects, as well as new ideas and needs that have come forward from Union folks over the past year. And as we filled in the calendar, we continued to ask: How does this event or activity*

*meet one of the ends in our visioning statement? Perhaps the biggest difference this year from last year, is that rather than each board having projects of their own, we will share projects between boards, and Union folks not on boards will be extended invitations to join in – so teams can grow up around projects. As we live into our visioning statement, and new ideas and projects emerge during the year, we will ask ourselves: how do they fit with what we are doing NOW, and have we the resources NOW? The intention is to keep track of the ideas that come forward, and not let them get lost in the shuffle, and at the same time stay focused -- at the end of the year, we will be assessing if indeed we accomplished what we intended and revisit what we have set aside.*

*Here's an example of a series of activities that meet some of our 'ends' according to our Visioning Statement: As you know, we have received a grant from the Justice and Witness Team of the MN Conference for a worship service celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King's vision of justice for all people (January 16, 2011). And the Twin Cities Gospel Choir will be joining us! This service will be open to the entire community with the intention of letting folks in and around Elk River know about Union as a place of celebration and welcome. So far, a core group of folks, the organizing team, has been meeting, and soon the team will be reaching out to others in our congregation with invitations to become involved – from hospitality and advertising to worship.*

*But the service is only one piece of a whole for the year, as we will be educating ourselves on the way there... and that's a way of meeting our visioning end of growing in spiritual depth. To this 'end' I will be offering a book/bible study called 'Theologically Sound' on six Sunday afternoons this fall, with the intention of looking at 'difficult readings' from different perspectives. Also, Adult Forum team leaders will be hosting speakers on at least two Thursday evenings this fall to look with more depth at some of the social and interfaith issues that have come up on Sunday mornings.*

*Add to this, in Youth Forum and Sunday School, our kids will be invited to participate in the art project that is already going on: 'Images of Social Justice.' Or another way to talk about the project is to ask our kids: what does it look like to love our neighbors? Yes, we do have much to look forward to!*

*With that said, on September 5th after worship, we will celebrate the music ministry of our beloved Doug who is retiring. We will miss him greatly! And on September 12th we will welcome our new organist Ben. Ben will surely be a blessing to us. And being the music hearted folks that we are at Union, we have Sunday afternoons this fall to look forward to. On the first Sunday of each month we will have a musical event: October we host a professional music trio, November we host our house musicians in a Broadway Concert, December is Advent Evensong – a service of music and reflection. Then January brings the Twin Cities Gospel Choir, and looking forward, Woody, my brother has promised a return visit; and we are also looking at the possibilities of another organ concert later in the spring! Watch out for invitations to be a part of these events – one or all – in a variety of ways! And as always, if you have musical ideas, do sing out and let us know!*

*Do you sense my excitement? It's the promise of those fall colors that is stirring my imagination. So with thanks to God, and prayers for healing and peace in this world, let autumn begin!*

*Your sister in Christ, Dana*

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## **Welcome Ben Jeitz**

The Worship & Arts Committee would like to welcome our new organist, Benjamin Jeitz, to the Union staff. Ben lives in Minneapolis and is involved in many different musical venues. In addition to his duties as a church musician, he is a teacher of piano, voice and organ. He also serves as core tenor section leader for the Minnesota Chorale and is an active accompanist throughout the Twin City area. Ben is a graduate of Concordia College in Moorhead with degrees in voice and organ and is planning on attending the University of Minnesota beginning in January to finish his Master's Degree in vocal performance. He will be offering piano, organ and voice lessons beginning in September. Lessons will be taught at Union Congregational Church and are available to students of all ages and levels of experience, within this congregation and the larger community. Contact Ben if you are interested! (410) 980-2685 or [jeitzb@yahoo.com](mailto:jeitzb@yahoo.com).



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## Make Music!

Beginning Wednesday, September 29th, **young adults and youth** in 8th Grade and up, are invited to gather in Fellowship Hall with Derek Atkinson to make music! Derek, who attended Berkley School of Music in Boston, and who traveled through Southeast Asia for a chunk of last year, is back with us, and will share his musical talent and love of improvisation.



So bring your instruments-- which could mean anything from guitar to voice to the knees you tap or the spoons you play, or simply your desire to be around the energy of music. Call it a jam session, a chance to experiment, a place to learn more about what you already play... maybe even a rehearsal for some Sunday worship!

In the United Church of Christ, we often say, *"Wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!"* In this spirit, beginners, experienced and onlookers are welcome! Derek and those gathered will determine how the time together goes.

Come once or each week! We'll get together at 6:15pm each Wednesday evening that Confirmation meets, and will end by 7pm. The schedule for the next two months: September 29, October 6, 13, 27. For more information, call Derek (763) 226-1631 or talk with Pastor Dana.

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### First Sunday Music Series

Beginning in October, the Worship & Arts Committee has special afternoon concerts planned for the first Sunday of each month! Mark your calendar and plan to join us!

**October 3rd: Indande Duo**

**November 7th: Broadway Music**

**December 5th: Evensong**

**January 16th: Twin Cities Gospel Choir**

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## Handbells are Ready to Ring!

With great appreciation to the Memorial Committee, the Handbell Choir will begin the new year ringing bells that have



been cleaned, polished, and adjusted at the Schulmerich Carrillon factory in Sellersville, Pennsylvania. With replacement of the ringing mechanism, the clapper, each bell should be working as beautifully as the day it first arrived at Union, twelve years ago. Thank you to all members and friends whose donations have made these much needed repairs possible!



The Union Congregational Church Handbell Choir is about to start another year of making music, working hard, enjoying great friendships, and sharing the love of God with our congregation through the art of English Handbell Ringing. The Handbell Choir is open to anyone willing to commit to a weekly rehearsal on Wednesdays and has some previous experience in music and a good natural sense of rhythm. New members are always welcome! The first rehearsal of the new year will be held on Wednesday, September 8th from 5:45-7pm. Call Marilyn Olson (763) 241-9122 with questions.

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## Youth...

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### Where Do All the Youth Go on Sunday Mornings at Union?

Check out the Youth Room! Welcome to Youth Forum! We will take a little different look this year. We will have guest speakers some weeks and then have open forum "chat" time on other weeks. See the schedule below. If you have a topic or a speaker suggestion please let Kristin Krueger know.



As always we will have coffee and other beverages and some yummy treats. On September 26th, we will work together on a collage; working towards the Martin Luther King service in January. Come join in the fun.

**September 12-** open forum and catch up- reconnect ...White Board Sunday

**September 19-** Guest speaker

**September 26-**Collage project- What is fair and just? What does a bully look like? What does it look like to be your neighbor?

**October 3-** open forum

**October 10-** Guest speaker

**October 17-** open forum

**October 24-** Guest speaker

**October 31-** Pancake Breakfast

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### **Youth Chili Kick-off & Barbie Baseball Game September 19th**

Youth Chili Kickoff Get together /Come Join the Barbie Baseball Game!!!! September 19th at the Krueger House (17921 233rd Ave. NW Big Lake) Directions- call or see Kristin's desk at church. Bring any games you would like to, your swim suit and towel, your appetite, and a lawn chair you don't really care about. Bring a guest if you want... No cost for this event!!



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### **Conference Youth Event (CYE)**

Mark your calendar! The CYE event will be at Pilgrim Point Camp in Alexandria October 22-24th. Grades 9-12 are invited. The Cost is \$37.50 Please let Kristin know if you are interested in attending. As always, if finances keep you from participating, please speak with Pastor Dana.

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### **Halloween Event for Youth!**

Mark your calendar! On October 30th from 2-4pm, we'll have a spooky house at church! Bring your ideas to Marthe or Kristin, and bring a guest if you want!!!



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### **Urban Immersion Retreat**

Join us November 5th-7th for an Urban Immersion Service Retreat! The retreat will combine an overview of poverty and its causes with hands-on help for those in need. We'll leave Union at 5pm, and return on Sunday at 11pm. Open to grades 7-12. Join us for a rewarding weekend. RSVP for this event to Kristin, [email](#), text, or call! I will need a few adults to help with this weekend, if you are interested please let me know! There is no cost for this event.

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### **Feed My Starving Children Event is Open to EVERYONE**

As you package meals for the world's hungriest children, you will

discover a deep sense of service and community. Feed My Starving Children relies on donations to purchase the ingredients for their scientifically formulated food. As more volunteers pack meals, we need more dollars to purchase the necessary ingredients. Please consider making a monetary donation in addition to your donation of time and energy. For additional information regarding Feed My Starving Children, visit their [website!](#)



Join us on Friday, November 12th when we head to Feed My Starving Children to package meals from 6-7:30pm. Everyone at Union is welcome, please join us!!! Sign up in the narthex! There are 50 spaces available; bring a guest if you'd like! Carpooling will be available; we will leave Union at 5:15pm and return at 8pm or a little later.

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### **Confirmation Note**

To all returning Confirmation students, parents and friends in faith: We are set for another great year leaning more about our faith, ourselves and each other. All parents and friends in faith will receive a biweekly email to keep you informed on what's being covered in class. It will include the main topic discussed and specific bible verses used for that particular week. A schedule for the entire year was emailed. We also will visit the Global Market in Minneapolis (Date TBD). Please note April 6th on your calendar for our annual visit to Simpson House. If you have any questions or concerns please contact Kirk (441-1825) or Kris (441-1203). Again on behalf of Dana, Kris, and Kirk – welcome back! Kirk Atkinson & Kris Krueger, Confirmation Co-facilitators

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### ***Kids...***

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#### **Vacation Bible School a Huge Success!**

Things were hopping down the street at Holy Trinity last week when thirty-six children from the combined congregations of Union, Elk River Lutheran, and Holy Trinity got together for VBS! "It was a huge hit! And we'll definitely be doing it again next year," said Cari Osmek, Interim Youth Minister at Elk River Lutheran. The week closed



with a celebratory service in the sanctuary at Holy Trinity. Parents and caregivers were swept up in song as their children played instruments and marched to vivacious music around the room. Throughout the week, the children at VBS learned about Malaria, and pooled their coins (totaling over \$225) to help purchase bed nets for families in countries where Malaria is prevalent.

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### **Hey! Don't Miss Rally Day!**

We'll kick off the beginning of a new Sunday School year on September 12th! Bring your child/ren, grades Pre-K through 7th, to the Chorister Room at 9:30am for a welcome back session.

Then at 9:45, our children will be excused into their classrooms where they will meet their teachers. From 10:15-10:30am, we will

head out to the front of the church to create welcoming artwork on the sidewalks and enjoy some Dilly Bars! There will be a Sunday School parent meeting in the Chorister Room immediately following the children's dismissal into their classrooms (9:45).

Although it won't be long, we will cover some important information about the upcoming year.

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### **Introducing the 2010-11 Sunday School Teachers**

This year, the Christian Education Director, Marthe Herbert, is incredibly excited to introduce you to the phenomenal team of Sunday School teachers who have volunteered their time to be with our kids!

**Pre-K: Jane Houlton, Ann Johnson, Patti Kubicka & Hilary**

**Olson. 1st & 2nd Grade: Gretchen Albu, Kelly Kalahar &**

**Tracy Pierce. 3rd & 4th Grade: Marv Andersen, Kirk**

**Atkinson & Shelly Petters. 5th, 6th & 7th Grade: Paula Filipiak, Kevin McNabb &**

**Andrea Oman. Please stop in and say hello to these incredible volunteers!**

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### **Sunday School Lessons Up-and-Coming**

To better assist you in participating with your child's faith journey, the newsletter will contain the Sunday School lessons four weeks out. So...

September 19: Joseph & Pharoah (Genesis 39:20-41, 57)

September 26th: Joseph & Pharoah

October 3rd: Joseph & Pharoah

October 10th: Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-20)

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## Make a Joyful Noise!



Calling all 3rd graders through 7th graders!

**Choristers starts on Wednesday, September 15th!** Choristers is a children's choir which meets weekly on Wednesdays to practice, and to prepare for about six performances in church throughout the year. Children do not need to know how to sing! This is the perfect place to start. A lot of time is spent learning how to sing, and what to do to conquer nervousness. Time is spent on how to use your voice for stage speaking. NO child leaves this program without learning some great lessons that will help them throughout their lifetime! Every Chorister is encouraged to stretch outside of their comfort zone and try something new. Children will be amazed and rightfully proud of what they can accomplish. They will develop a greater sense of self-confidence and group confidence. Encourage your child to bring a friend! All kids are welcome to come and try it out! Contact Amy McNabb at the church office for more information.

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### Calling all Acolytes

We are looking for volunteers to light the candles during each worship service. If you are in third grade or above and think you might be interested, please contact Marthe in the office, or sign up on Rally Day. Training for acolytes will be on Wednesday, September 15th at 5:45pm, or Sunday, September 19th immediately following each service. This is an important ministry you can provide for our church!



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## Looking Ahead...

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### Party Planned for Sunday, September 5th

As you know, our Doug Potter, organist for Union Church, is retiring. Please plan to join us on Sunday, September 5th at 9:30am when he shares special music during worship. In addition, please join us in



Fellowship Hall at 10:30am that morning as we celebrate Doug and the gift of music he has shared with us over the years.



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### **September 12th is Rally Day!**

That means we'll begin having two worship services each Sunday morning, at 8:30 & 10:45am! Also beginning on Rally Day: 9:30am Sunday school for kids, Youth Forum for 8th-12th graders, and 9:40am Adult Forum. Nursery care is provided all morning for children ages 0-5.

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### **Adult Forum**

Beginning on Rally Day, September 12th, we will kick off another year of adult forum. We will be offering a host of topics this year and hope to see as many of you as possible at our sessions. We will be meeting regularly between services, beginning at approximately 9:40. The September 12th and 19th forums will address the topic of compassion and how it relates to our contemporary society. We will revisit some of the material found in "Living the Questions," our resource from a couple years ago. Other sessions will follow, and you will be kept informed as they unfold. We hope to provide an enjoyable, rewarding, thought-provoking experience each Sunday. Come and check us out. Your facilitators: John Olson, Su Arnold, & Cheryl Wold

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### **Theologically Sound**

On six Sunday afternoons this fall, from 4-5:30pm, Pastor Dana will host a bible/book study that's not your ordinary study! Join in the discussion as we look at challenging passages in scripture from alternative perspectives. We'll talk about the context of readings, how the cultural experiences that shape us influence our interpretations, and how interpretations can justify or free our understanding.



Please sign up on the sheet in the narthex or call the church office. Come to all or one!

**September 19, 26 October 10, 17 November 14, 21**

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### **Meet & Greet**

Beginning in October, the Growth and Membership committee will again host "Meet & Greet" on selected Sundays. This will be a place to share stories with newcomers and longtime friends. Stay tuned!

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## **Dinners for 7, 8 or 9**

Are you ready to get to know a few people better around here? A great way to do that is to join a dinner group! Couples, friends and individuals enjoy being a part of Dinners for 7, 8 or 9. Sign up in the Narthex to be joined together with a group of other Union church-goers in groups of seven, eight or nine. Those groups will gather about four times this year to share a meal



together in homes. Each group decides their own schedule and how the dinners will work. Most groups decide to do a potluck, the host/ess providing the main meal. Traditionally, groups don't begin their dinners until after the holidays, but each group has reign over themselves. Turn it into a game night, a dessert gathering, or wine tasting... you decide! This is an excellent way to get to know more people from church, in a more casual environment!

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## **Trunk Sale Set for Saturday, October 2nd, 9:00am**

The Centennial Society invites you to gather your handmade crafts, furniture, garden produce, and anything else you want to sell, and be a part of the first ever TRUNK SALE! Members of the church may rent a parking spot, and pull up their car or truck, open the trunk and open for business! Lot spots are \$10. Call Janelle Johnson or Joyce Riess with any questions.

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## **Neighbors in Need**

On Sunday, October 3rd, we will again take a special offering for Neighbors in Need (NIN). NIN is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries(JWM) to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects.

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## **Laity Sunday**

The Deacons are seeking your nominations for Lay Person of the Year. Forms are available in the entrance to the sanctuary. Please take a moment and nominate someone who you believe is doing an extraordinarily great job as a volunteer! Completed forms can be placed in the Diaconate mailbox in the office, or left in the

offering plate. All lay volunteers and the layperson of the year will be honored on Sunday, October 10th.

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### **Guest Speakers Coming to Union**

Join us Thursday, October 14th at 7pm when our guest will be a representative from the Minnesota Council of Churches, speaking about faithful citizenship. The conversation will cover interfaith principles and God's call to build a just society.

And, join us on Thursday, November 18th at 7pm when we welcome a guest speaker from the Refugee Speakers Bureau (RSB). The RSB is a group of refugees and asylees who have studied public speaking and are interested in sharing their stories with communities so that audiences: will learn about the refugee experience; expand their understanding of the world outside the U.S. and the international community within it; learn more about the work of Refugee Services; be inspired to advocacy; and, work to create a community that welcomes the stranger. Watch for more details regarding the speaker in a later newsletter.

To learn more about the Refugee Speakers Bureau, visit their [website](#).

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### **Church Council Meetings**



Have you heard? Church Council will now be meeting monthly on the first Thursday. All boards should have at least one representative in attendance, and others are encouraged to attend any Church Council meeting. The next meeting will be on Thursday, September 2nd 7:00pm. The Minutes from the last Church Council meeting can be found by clicking [here](#).

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### **Memorial Committee Report**

In Memory of Dick Berg - designated Kitchen Fund: Don and Len Aarestad and Lillian Lyrek, Pat Billig and Andrea Oman, Charlie and Jean Brown, Bruce and Janelle Johnson, Joyce Norell, Bob and Joyce Oberg, Anna Palmer, Don and Bev Putnam, Jerry and Marilyn Schroeder, Ron and Jackie Schuelein, Martha Travis, Union Church

Choir, Larry and Jan Wick.

In Memory of Glenn Nyquist – not designated: Tom and Steph Brown, Val Hanson, Robert and Judy Herrig, Bruce and Janelle Johnson, John and Marilyn Olson, Marv Ediger.

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### **Delegates Report on the Annual Meeting**

*The annual meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ was held the second weekend in June at the College of St. Benedict in Collegeville, Minnesota. Union Congregational Church UCC was represented by three voting delegates. To learn more about their experience, click [here](#).*

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### ***Within the Family***

*To see personal notes written to the congregation, click [here](#).*

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### **Happy Birthday!!**

You can access a listing of the September birthdays by clicking [here](#)!

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### **Union Church Volunteer Schedule**

You may now access the volunteer schedule for usher/greeters, deacons, sound system, flowers and coffee hosts on our web page. Check it out by clicking [here](#). There is also a link at the top of our web page. Just for fun, we've titled the coffee hosts "brewers"!

Did you know, the church's master calendar is accessible from every computer with internet access! A link to the calendar can be found on our home page at [www.elkriverucc.org](http://www.elkriverucc.org), or by clicking [here](#)!

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### ***Community Events...***

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### **Painting the Farm**

Make plans to visit the Kelley Farm Labor Day weekend to shop the 2nd annual art sale in the visitor's center. Original paintings, prints and greeting cards are created especially for this



fundraising event; and the art is based on Kelley Farm themes. Contributing artists include Nancy Gongoll and Sara Hartman.



Funds benefit the Friends of the Kelley Farm

Scholarship program which helps pay for 1,200-1,500 students to attend the farm each year!

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### **Fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity**

Harlem Ambassadors Game! Join the Central Minnesota Habitat for Humanity as they host a fundraiser to fund the Women Build Project happening this fall to support their mission of providing safe, decent, affordable housing. The event will be held at St. Cloud State University on Saturday, September 18th at 5pm. The



Harlem Ambassadors are a comedy basketball team made up of talented women and men. The game will be fun, wholesome entertainment for all ages! Call (320) 656-8890 to purchase your tickets! Or learn more on their [website](#).

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### **Hospice Motorcycle Ride**

Guardian Angels † Elim Hospice HOSPICE MOTORCYCLE RIDE

September 18, 2010

9am-4pm

PineBrook Inn - Cambridge, Minnesota

For more information, contact Darla Thurner 763-552-2160

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### **Rake the Town!**

The crisp air will be here before we know it, and those luscious green leaves will be turning color and falling soon. The church office received a notice this week regarding "Rake the Town" which **will be held on Saturday, October 30th**. This is a day when community members gather to help homeowners who are elderly, disabled, as well as family caregivers. Call Faith in Action by Friday, October 15th if you are in need of some help with your fall yard clean-up. Or, if you'd like to help rake the town! (763) 263-4277.



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### **Electronic News**

*This communication has been sent electronically to those people in our congregation*

who have given us their email address. Email communication saves money, time and natural resources. If you have received a paper copy of this newsletter, it is because we do not have an email address for you, or you have signed up on the "i prefer paper" list in the office. Please, if you do have an email address, [email the office today](#) so we can add you to the growing list of E-News folks! Thanks!

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### Next E-News:

The next newsletter deadline is Monday, September 20th. Please send in your announcements and/or **pictures** for use in this exciting format to [churchoffice@elkriverucc.org](mailto:churchoffice@elkriverucc.org) for consideration in the October Newsletter.

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*Minister: Rev. Dr. Dana Mann*

*Moderator: Tom Brown*

*Christian Education Director: Marthe Herbert*

*Youth Ministries Coordinator: Kristin Krueger*

*Organist: Benjamin Jeitz; Choral Director: Amy McNabb; Hand Bell Director: Marilyn Olson;*

*Administration & Communications Coordinator: Linda Zupon; Nursery: Mary Westholter; Maintenance:*

*Ken Stueve & Kyle Stueve*

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Union Congregational Church, United Church of Christ  
1118 Fourth Street  
Elk River, Minnesota 55330

