We will be doing crack seal repairs to the parking lot this year, using carryover money from 2019. Cost will be approximately $5000. A second phase seal coat will be completed in 2021. Discussions will take place with St. John’s and UCC on possible construction of a new church entryway including concrete, doors, windows and an expansion for a storage closet. Estimated cost would be approximately $20,000. Quotes and discussion are pending for possible acoustic control in the Fellowship Hall and for roof repairs over the Sunday School where previous leaks into the Sunday School have occurred.

A Strategic Planning Committee for reopening the Mansface Church Building has been formed. Members include Jessica Robidoux, Carla Lee, Kay Carmody, Ruth Lauritzen, Deborah Gaspar, Judy Graham, Debbie Braithwaite, and Jenny Boteler.

As church services resume within the church building, they are currently limited to a small number of people. See the information for each church in this newsletter. Everyone will be required to have their temperatures taken. The church has an infrared thermometer for this purpose. You will be asked some Covid related health questions. You will be required to wear a mask and adhere to proper distancing. There will be masks available but if you own one already be sure to bring it to church. If you are provided a mask please remember to bring it back for the next service as there is only a limited supply that various folks have sewn for our church.

If you are wanting to use the church building for other small groups of 4-8 people, you must get approval from Ruth Lauritzen or Jenny Boteler. You will be required to wear a mask, adhere to proper distancing and disinfect the area where the use has occurred. Food and beverages will not be allowed. Certain exceptions for beverages may be allowed on a limited basis to be approved by Ruth or Jenny. Organizations wanting to use the building will be required to adhere to the same requirements. Use of the building will be very limited at the present time.
PASTORAL PONDERINGS

Wow... I just looked at my notes for last year’s June newsletter. Yes, I often go back and re-use pieces about monthly events that we repeat from year to year. For example: The Rocky Mountain Conference Annual Celebration, Pentecost, marking calendars for summer events like VBS or outdoor worship.

Anyway, back to my original thought. I just looked at my notes for last June’s newsletter and there is so much not happening this June due to Covid-19. Top that off with the fact that our well planned Sabbatical has been cancelled for this year, as well as so many activities that you may have had on your personal calendars, like graduation parties or weddings or a special trip somewhere. Some of you are even planning tentative events for June and July to bring closure to deaths and losses that have occurred during the last couple of months.

No matter how we look at it, this has been a hard season. Every one of us has had to give up something: regular routines and appointments, hopes for success at competitions, loved ones, proms, walking for our diplomas in an auditorium full of classmates and family, worshiping in the sanctuary with others, and more. While we have been creative and enduring in this time of global disruption, the losses still hurt. So with that said, I hope you have allowed yourselves the occasional meltdowns, the crying jags, the shaking your fist at the air. I know I sure have.

At first, I tried to keep it all positive. Chin up. I told myself my losses are minor compared to others. I worked hard to minimize and rationalize away the sorrow and anger. But grief does have a way of making itself known. These losses really do suck. So, go ahead and let it out! The psalmist did:

How long, oh Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will [this unseen] enemy triumph over us?
Look on me and answer, oh Lord my God. Give light to my eyes .... (Psalm 13: 1-3)

You feel that? Go ahead and write your own lament. Let it out. Make your demands known. God can handle it.

And then with gentleness for yourselves, take a deep breath, dust yourself off and open yourself to new plans and possibilities. And yes, this is hard, because truth is, we just don’t know how things will unfold with this virus. This is where hope and faith are required. So even as we lament and shake our fists at God, we can also open our hearts to trust and hope. Here’s the next couple verses of that Psalm:

But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing your praise, for even through this you have been good to me. (Ps. 13: 5-6)

So, what’s next?

Your church leaders have been working thoughtfully as we consider the how, when and whos of reopening the building and returning to worship and other activities. We are planning some very limited openings through June. Please take time to read through this newsletter so you have the latest information.

In the meantime, I pray that goodness and joy may bless your days. Be patient, stay healthy, and continue to find creative ways to live fully and love deeply.

Longing, but hopeful,
Pastor Jenny
Narcotics Anonymous
Mansface Church is home to the local NA chapter. Sunday night meetings are always an open meeting which means if you or a loved one is struggling with a drug addiction, you are welcomed to come. They meet at 8:00 p.m. in the Sunday School rooms.

Most Important News Concerning Covid-19 and Our Church

Return to Public Worship was the main topic at our May Diaconate meeting (via zoom). The two documents that informed our conversation were the May 13, 2020 Wyoming Health Department Restrictions for Religious Organizations and the May 14, 2020 Statement from the Rocky Mountain Conference UCC Board of Directors Regarding the Reopening of our Churches. As leaders in charge of overseeing the spiritual welfare of our congregation, we feel it is important to model responsible and respectful safe practices as our county and country navigate reopening. We need to be mindful and protective of the vulnerable people who are part of our congregation and community.

The consensus from our May 17th meeting, confirmed by Council on May 18th, is that Union Church will continue to live-stream worship on Facebook through June. To comply with best safe practices, we will open up our worship settings to 8-10 people, not including worship leaders. People who would like to be in these small groups of worshipers need to email or call the office to reserve a place on a particular Sunday (see dates below).

Our Sunday procedures and safe practices include the following:
- Enter through front red doors only where temperature and brief health screen will be taken. If someone’s temperature is over 100.4, they will be asked to please go home and worship virtually.
- Worshipers must wear mask (we have them here thanks to our Wednesday craft group)
- Worshipers need to maintain 6’ safe distance between people not of the same household
- No physical contact between people of different households
- There will be no fellowship time/coffee hour.

A Strategic Planning Team is also being formed to help us prepare for full church opening. This team will include leaders from St. John’s, Union and Churches Inc.

June Birthdays

Tom Jacobsen 3
Lucille Fleming 3
Jakob Lloyd 5
Terry Wiekhorst 7
Elaine Tutterrow 7
Jensyn Hamel 8
Bob Burke 12
Vicki Roth 24
Bob Bingham 28
Buck Leonard 30
Carol Richardson 30

June Anniversaries

John & Linda Malone 15
Tom & Ellen Jacobsen 19
Brian & Kelly Strampe 27
**SIGN UP FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP AND LEADERSHIP**

You will need to call the church office (875-3323) or email Pastor Jenny at revjen@sweetwaterhsa.com if you would like to attend a Sunday worship (up to 10 people) or help with the leadership (another 4 people). You will need to sign up for a particular Sunday no later than the Tuesday before. You will receive a confirmation email or call with specials instructions. Dates being scheduled are: June 7, June 14, June 21 June 28

Worship leaders we will need each week include the people listed below. Again, contact Pastor Jenny if you’d like to fill one of these roles.

- Greeter 1 to do health screening
- Greeter 2 to pass out worship materials
- Reader(s)
- Tech Support – help with the live stream recording

**WORSHIP WITH US**

Watch your emails each week for one that gives you all the info you need to worship on-line. Then **tune in Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. on our Facebook page.**

You do not have to have your own Facebook page. Just click on this link and it will take you there: [https://www.facebook.com/UnionCongregationalChurchUnit-edChurchOfChrist/](https://www.facebook.com/UnionCongregationalChurchUnit-edChurchOfChrist/)

If you do not have on-line access, let us know and we will send you a copy of the days worship and Pastor Jenny’s sermon and morning prayers.

Disclaimer: If you want to sleep in on Sundays, you can watch the Facebook live stream anytime. You also can find the videos on our website [www.unioncongregationalucc.org](http://www.unioncongregationalucc.org)

**NEW ADDRESS**

Here’s new contact info to send Sherry Held prayers for God’s peace and comfort following the death of her husband Mike, as well as happy new home and blessed retirement. It definitely is not unfolding as hoped or planned, but there is no where we can go that God’s presence can’t follow.

Blessings and peace, Sherry!

Sherry Held
2857 Twilight Ave. Helena, MT 59601
heldfamily@sweetwaterhsa.com

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Thank you for Keeping Up Your Offerings, Pledges and Contributions.

Thank you to everyone who has been making gifts and donations to Union Church during this time of being apart. If you’d like to make a gift or keep your pledge up to date, here’s how:

- Drop off your contribution at the church office Monday – Thursday 9 a.m. – noon.
- Mail a check to UCC at P.O. Box 400, Green River, WY 82935
- Set up automatic bill pay with your bank
- Make an on-line donation through PayPal. Go to our webpage: www.unioncongregationalucc.org and click on the Donate button, or look for the post on our Facebook page.

Sabbatical update

Sabbatical for 2020 has been canceled. 😞 Due to the current state of the world, international travel is just not responsible or safe at this time. Luckily the Clergy Renewal Program is allowing this year’s grants to be used through December 2021. The original planning team met and decided that our best option is to move the grant to next year, most likely beginning in mid-July and going through mid-October.

With that said, to prevent complete burn-out and disappointment, Pastor Jenny will be on a time of rest and renewal through the month of July. She will keep the cabin in Cody.

On Memorial Day weekend, Janelle Strampe Fried graduated from the University of Washington School of Medicine. She is officially Dr. Janelle Fried, M.D! She and her husband, Lucas and their 17 months old daughter, Adeline will move to Kansas City the first part of June, where she will do a 4 year residency in Pediatrics and Internal Medicine.

Congratulations Beard Scholarship Recipients

At the May Trustees meeting four scholarship applications were reviewed and all four rewarded scholarships for the 2020-21 year. Congratulations to the following students:

- Courtney McDonald will be attending Western Wyoming Community College to earn an Associate’s degree in nursing.
- Jessica Robidoux has been accepted into the University of Wyoming on-line Master’s program as she pursues a degree as a Nurse Educator.
- Krystal Simpson is heading to Arizona State University to work on a degree in Forensic Psychology.
- Aurora Wiekhorst will be going to Sheridan College to pursue a degree in Dental Hygiene.

Confirmation Class of 2020

Sunday, May 17th was a very special day in the life of Union Church. Four of our youth became full members through the Rite of Confirmation. Using best safe practices in the Covid days, Jensyn Hamel, Christian Lee, Jakob Lloyd and Ashlyn Santhuff gathered with a limited number of family members and their mentors down at the FMC Shelter for a special worship. Jakob was baptized and all four said “yes” to God’s amazing love known to us through Jesus Christ, and “yes” to being members of our congregation. Special thanks to their mentors: Judy Graham, Forrest Fry, Cliff Rockhold and Kelly Strampe. Be sure to check out our Facebook page to see our worship as well as other pictures from their year of study, prayer, service and fun.
Moderator’s Message June 2020

Happy “Summer”!! Even with the chilly nights, and bringing in and out those special vegetables to keep from freezing; I do believe summer might be upon us! With summer opening, we can take advantage of outdoor services, although still limited in number. It is planned to have two services during June outside. We will be informing you of those specific dates and where they will be taking place. We will be continuing to live stream, as it is so nice to have so many of our friends and family from afar joining us. Such a blessing, is this technology and minds that can figure it out for us. I have been attending Zoom meetings with other moderators in the churches of the Rocky Mountain conference. Once again, we are blessed to live in an area where there are not many cases. However, we must be still vigilant in keeping ourselves safe as well as others we come in contact with. We pray that you are making it through this pandemic with little to no complications! Please let us know if there is anything, we can do for you!

Xoxoxoxoxox

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**YOU BUY, WE EARN!**

**Smith’s INSPIRING DONATIONS**

Support Union Congregational Church every time you shop at Smith’s!

Signing up is FREE and EASY!

1. Go to SmithsFoodandDrug.com/inspire
2. Sign into your digital account or choose “Create an Account” and fill in the information.
3. Link your Rewards Card, search Union Congregational Church Green River, WY or use NR617 and choose “Save”.

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**THIS IS NEW!!!**

Even if you signed up a couple years back, you MUST DO IT AGAIN!
Happy Summer everyone! The Vestry met and we have decided to open services back up in June. We have a few hoops to jump through with the Diocese but hope to have our first in-person service on June 7th. I will keep you apprised through email. If anyone has not been getting my emails through our hiatus, send your contact information to me at rlauritzen62@gmail.com and I will add you to the list.

One of the questions that the Diocese wants us to consider before reopening is, “What we have learned during the time we were unable to gather together?” It is an interesting question and one that I have thought about a lot. These are my conclusions in no particular order:

People are what make a church, not the building.
However, buildings sure are convenient and carry a lot of our traditions.
There are a lot of hymns on YouTube.
God was correct when he said that it is best when we worship in community
I am lousy at Zoom.
We need each other more than I thought.

I am looking forward to seeing you all again.

Love,

Ruth
Please remember these families in your prayers

  Becky Gomez, Eli Muller - Jean and Thane Yennnie's grandson, Mike Hanks, Morris and Trish Sheets, Cherie and Jack Haire, Jose' Alvarez, Margo, Jack, Kyle, Tim, Evie Grace Huebner, Kasyn, the Porter family, Marion, Kenny, Nathan and Briana Wolfe, Joan Palin, Friede Foster, Debbie and Kendra.

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**St. John’s June Worship Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Service Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 7th,</td>
<td>1st Sunday after Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service: Ruth Lauritzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 14th,</td>
<td>2nd Sunday after Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service: Ruth Lauritzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 21st,</td>
<td>3rd Sunday after Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service: Ruth Lauritzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 28th,</td>
<td>4th Sunday after Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Morning Prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service: Ruth Lauritzen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**JUNE BIRTHDAYS**

- Kendra Lewis 14
- Roberta Carmody 15
- Joe Ruess 18
- Kristin Gasaway 25
- Karin Kelly 25
- Maurgan Porter 27

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**JUNE Anniversaries**

- Tim and Liz Warren 2
- Rick and Maurgan Porter 13
- Dwaine and Teresa Shafe 22