

Union Congregational Church, Hackensack, MN - Want Ad

April 11, 2017

Union Congregational Church, a theologically and socially progressive congregation in the north central Minnesota City of Hackensack, seeks a full-time Interim Minister to begin in August, 2017. Union is open to the possibility, after the initial contract period, of converting the Interim Minister contract to a Call Agreement if all parties sense the leading of the Holy Spirit in this regard. Salary and benefits accord with Minnesota Conference guidelines. A full Local Church Profile is available.

Union Church is a 160-member congregation serving Hackensack's greater, rural community. Hackensack is a town of just under 300 people situated on the shore of Birch Lake, midway between Brainerd and Bemidji. Greater Hackensack is a beautiful four-season family vacation land dotted with lakeside and countryside residences. It offers not only crystal clear lakes but also a multiplicity of resorts, shops, restaurants, trails and golf courses. Within a ten-mile radius of town lie 127 lakes, The Foothills State Forest, the Chippewa National Forest, The Deep Portage Learning Center, the Ojibwe Band's Northern Lights Casino and the Bear Pause four-screen movie theater. Wildlife abounds in the surrounding fields and the pine and hardwood forests. The Paul Bunyan Trail runs through town, and, along with other local trails, offers opportunities for hiking, biking, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. The National Park Service North Country National Scenic Trail linking scenic, natural, historic and cultural areas across seven states passes nearby and is an attraction to both local and visiting hiking enthusiasts.

Since its founding in 1905, Union has enjoyed a long ministry of service. Its current minister, The Rev. Michael Small, who will retire at the end of July, has been its Pastor since 1992. Like many congregations, Union's numbers have declined since their peak in the early 2000s. Nevertheless, the congregation is a vital community presence.

Weekly worship attendance, largely of an older generation, numbers 75 - 100 in summer and 35 - 40 in the depths of winter. A choir and a bell choir support Sunday worship throughout most of the year. With the local Lutheran and Roman Catholic congregations Union marks the church year with weekday ecumenical services in Advent and Lent.

Union's activities include a Treasure Sale for the benefit of its Christian Education Program and a Walleye Fish Fry sponsored by the Men's and Women's Fellowships; a July Vacation Bible School attracting 35-40 children; and post-worship public forums on topics of both local and

Union Congregational Church, Hackensack, MN - Want Ad

April 11, 2017

worldwide concern. Concurrently with the school year, Union holds a weekly Family Dinner Table which is open to the public at no charge. Throughout the year, congregants volunteer at the local Food Shelves (Hackensack and Walker), and at Cass County Faith in Action which provides services to the elderly to enable them to age in place. A Justice Ministry Team seeks to foster better understanding between the Caucasian and Native American communities. Union's staff includes a Parish Nurse, who provides basic nursing services as well as health education and counseling and spiritual care both to the congregation and to members of the wider community.

The congregation completed a "New Beginnings Assessment" in 2016. The resulting plan to redefine its mission lists four priorities:

1. Become an ONA Congregation (completed, 2016)
2. Sustain our Parish Nurse Program
3. Focus on Our Ministry to Elders
4. Focus on Our Mission to the Community and the World

The Interim Minister's duties will include:

- Prepare and lead weekly services and special services including weddings and funerals.
- Supervise five part-time staff members in coordination with related ministry teams.
- Visit hospitalized and shut-in members.
- Provide support and guidance to lay-led ministry teams including the Youth Ministry Team.
- Visit current and prospective members.
- Provide guidance to the Church Council, including its review of our current church structure and its search for a Called Minister.
- Support and manage church correspondence and communications: phones, Facebook®, website, newsletter, advertising and congregational mailings.
- Facilitate relationships with outside community groups that use church space.
- Provide leadership focused on the continuing momentum and growth of the church.

Qualifications include ordination in the UCC or another denomination in communion with the UCC; interim training and experience; excellent skills in communication, organization, time management, and interpersonal relationships.