



JANUARY CHURCHLETTER

BUILDING A FUTURE WITH HOPE BY REACHING OUT AND GROWING DEEPER: Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, are you preparing for a new year, an improved relationship with God and others? Your prayers are making a difference in all of these endeavors as you are transformed more and more into Jesus followers. I am still praying that every day you grow more in faith as you welcome the opportunities to love God and neighbor.

Are you giving thanks for those brave prayer partners in our midst who are volunteering to pray for our revitalized church and committing to pray with another person weekly? Imagine the lives being changed! As a reminder for everyone, please pray with this as a guide covering the Body of Christ with prayer:

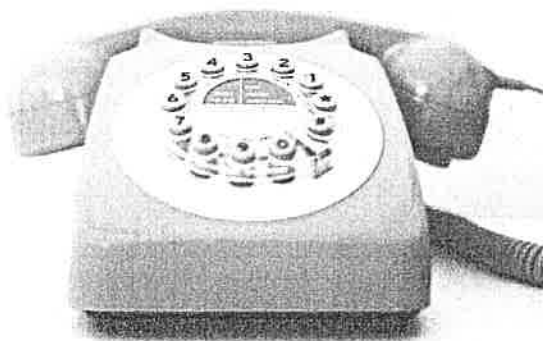
- For a joyful unified recognition of Jesus Christ as Lord
- For a hungering and thirsting after the Word of God and the Spirit of God in our local churches
- For pastors and leaders struggling to give leadership through this pandemic
- For a deepened appetite for prayer to arise and be mobilized in our churches
- For our churches to become agencies of all manner of healing in our communities
- For discipleship to take root and bring deep wholeness to people
- For the raising up of spiritually gifted apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers within our churches (Eph. 4:11)
- That churches would be awakened to their mission to make disciples who reach the lost

How is God inviting you to pray for one another, the world and all who live in it? My goal for this course was to have every person in every congregation connected to another. This turned into a much more complicated project. A part of this project is to have current contact information set up so that each church's leadership could update people easier to improve communication with one another. This will help each church enter the future with hope and courage as transparency improves.

If you feel God's nudging you to be a prayer partner with a particular person, please let me know. I want this time to be renewing and life-giving to your spirit. Your prayers together make an impact beyond our human understanding. Your efforts are making disciples (the

reason God placed us here) and leading our churches to accomplish the mission God appointed us to.

Call 1-507-333-0110
to hear our latest sermon



Another reminder, I applied for a free 6-month subscription to Sermons by Phone. When you call 3330110 (a local Faribault Number) you can listen to the Sunday service. I've recently upped the volume, thanks to your feedback. There is one higher level yet. Let me know if you think it needs it. This is another way, besides mailing copies of the bulletins and sermons to some who have requested it for the people without the necessary internet connection or technological source to remain connected with the church. YouTube links emailed as available and Facebook live the morning of worship continues. Thanks for your prayerful support and financial assistance.

By now, you may have tried the online way of giving from each church's website. It is quite easy and very convenient. The company name is VANCO. #1-Select your fund, click the donate button, choose the amount and frequency, then proceed to payment. #2-Enter your credit card, debit card or checking account information, (if you sign up for a free account, you can save your payment information for future donations) #3 Review and submit your gift by clicking submit. From your Vanco Online account, you can review your giving history, manage recurring donations or update payment information. Thanks again for your gift based on God's transforming love.

Be aware many dates and activities can be changed in a short time. Please watch for updates. Keep on praying.

Remember newsletter deadline is the 20th of every month.

Loving Thoughts and Prayers Surround:

New Perspective

Joan Schwake

Pleasant View Estates

Shirley Bauer

Pleasant Manor

Ken Bauer

Faribault Senior Living

Mildred Tatge

The Homestead of Rochester

Lorry Wille

Ivy Hill

Ken Shaske

Mill City

Richard Hanson

At Home

Jean Pederson

Donovan Mueller

Doris Hildebrandt

Arlene Shaske

Arlene Bultman

Kaye Spike



Joys and Concerns

THANK YOU!! Everyone for your prayers, concerns, and well wishes regarding my recent hospitalization at Abbott Heart Institute in Mpls. I had a TAVR procedure done to replace the aortic valve in my heart. Surgery went well and I am recuperating at home under the loving care of my daughter, Yvonne and her siblings. Wishing you all a very Blessed Holiday Season! Blessings, Shirley Little

Our Christian sympathy to Pastor Lora on the death of her mother on Dec. 12th. Private family graveside services were held on Dec. 27th.

The members of St John's would like to extend their sympathies to Pastor Lora with the loss of her Mother.

For those who remember Rev. Schultz's sister Margaret Schultz, she passed away Dec. 10th with a family graveside service held Dec. 12th in Missouri. Margaret was the administrator of the Emmaus Homes and spoke at both our churches about that facility.

Thank you for your generosity for warm Christmas greetings and appreciated gifts. (I'm saving up for an espresso machine- I look forward to serving you a cappuccino soon!) This year, your many prayers and sympathies for the loss of my mom, Edith Thompson, helped to sustain me through lost sleep and deep sorrow. We are hoping to plant a tree in memory of her with your generous undesignated gifts. Your prayers continue to change the world.
Pastor Lora

Many of you may already be aware of our support for a living kidney donor for a friend and neighbor of our churches, Anne Haynes (Donkers). To begin the kidney donation process, please go to [Fairview Transplant \(umnhealthlivingdonor.org\)](http://FairviewTransplant(umnhealthlivingdonor.org)) or call 800.328.5465. If you or someone you know is willing to offer life, please share this and keep praying.

Just a friendly reminder, I send out prayer chain requests and other announcements via email. If you want to be a part of this valuable ministry, please email me your email to pastorlora@live.com. Thanks so much for your prayers and help in building the kingdom of God here on earth.
Pastor Lora

Reminder: Members and friends of St. John's - remember to get your end of year of year contributions in by Dec. 31st as we will be closing the books. Thank you all for your continual generous support.
Deacons: Gordie Wiegrefe, Sarah Becher and Brian Homeier

Notice: The 53rd annual meeting of the Methodist Memorial Knoll Cemetery will be held Jan. 20 at 1:00 p.m. at Nerstrand United Methodist Church.

Wednesday Wear

We started Nov. 1 with Winter Hours: Nov. through March our hours are Wednesdays 1-5 p.m. and Saturdays 9 to noon.



Thank you for all your help and support with money and donated items. At this time, we are in need of girls clothing sizes 3 to teen and boys 3-6- & 9 month. We could also use infant boys and girls sleepwear. We are thankful we are still open to fulfill a need. We are being careful and taking precautions. Have a Wonderful and Blessed holiday season.

We do require masks and we only allow so many people downstairs at a time. But, you can shop in our fellowship hall for holiday décor. These items are yours for a monetary donation.

We are now taking donations (clothing and household items) again but, please don't bring a carload, maybe a bag or two at a time. Everything needs to be clean and ready to wear-No tears or stains.
Come see us on Wednesdays 1-5 pm or Saturdays 9am to noon at Nerstrand UMC.

P-P-P Remember 2-2-2, 2nd 2sday of the month 2pm. January 12 is the date, **2 pm**

is the time and I ask you to set aside time to pray. Please keep setting aside time for pausing and praying for our communities and praising God for all that God gives us. If you know of a prayer concern or joy, please let me know and I will



add it to my prayer journal. Let me know if you'd like others to be aware of your prayer concern. Remember, your presence in prayer matters. That is what changes lives. Plan for at least a half hour, no longer than an hour. It makes a difference in the world and in your own life.

Sunday, Jan. 17, Nerstrand UMC will observe Human Relations Sunday. This special offering allows us to join with United Methodists around the world and remember that the size of the table of divine love is unlimited. To give by mail: Send checks to: GCFA, P.O. Box 340029, Nashville, TN 37203. Please put name of Sunday in note section

MEMORIALS AT THE CHURCHES IN MEMORY OF LOVED

ONES:

Poinsettias in memory of:

Deloris & Delbert Bultman, Nancy Wesely, Agnes & Melvin Deike, Jim and Gladys Deike, Duane Deike, Robert E. Deike, Donald E. Bauer and Leonard & Florence Bultman From: Mary & Chris Bultman

Poinsettias in memory of our parents Edith and Harley Thompson and Ray and Ruth Thorn given by Rick Thorn and Pastor Lora



A monetary gift was given to the Nerstrand E. U. B. Cemetery in memory of Brandyn Hildebrandt by Lisa and Bryce Schmidtke.

A Poinsettia in Loving Memory of Harold & Lois Homeier; Wayne, Gordon, & Terry Homeier; LeRoy & Shirley Foss; Paul, Ted, & Eric Foss.....Living in Memory from Theron Homeier Foss; Brian & Tasha Homeier & family; Chrissy & Jim Alexander & family; and Michelle & Tim Otte & family

Greater Minnesota Gas, Inc. (GMG) would like to remind residential homeowners or renters of the Energy Assistance Program (EAP). This federally funded program helps pay for home heating costs and furnace repairs for income-qualified households. Please contact your local EAP provider to apply. For help finding your local EAP provider, call us at 888-931-3411. Applications must be received or postmarked by May 31, 2021 to be processed for benefits for 2020-2021 program year. You can find more information on-line at the Minnesota Department of Commerce website at : <https://mn.gov/commerce/>

St. John's UCC Sunday School

St. John's Sunday School sends wishes for a healthy and happy 2021!

Thank you to Becky Tatge for enabling us to provide our 2020 Christmas Eve program via video. It wasn't the same as being together for our traditional Christmas Eve service, but that was par for 2020 – many things were not the same! We hope the program still provided a meaningful Christmas message for both the students and the viewers.

Children ages 4 years through 8th grade are welcome to join us for Sunday School at 9:30am; classes will resume on Sunday, January 10, 2021 (via Zoom until further notice). Please contact Carrie Hess with any questions.



St John's UCC Council Meeting Minutes

The December meeting for St. John's UCC was called to order by Moderator Doug Spike on December 14, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

Opening devotions offered by Pastor Lora.

Pastor Lora's vacation December 22-29.

SPRC: continued review of the yoking agreement. Will discuss further at the annual meeting.

Secretary's report read and approved

Treasurer's report read and approved. Budget for 2021 reviewed and approved.

Trustee's report: Trusses for the new roof have been delivered. The old flag has been replaced. Furnace service has been done.

Old business; none

New business: Further furnace work needed. Discussed replacement of the left motor.

Message board needs repair. Zack volunteered to take care of this.

New phone directory being compiled

Discussed Spiritual Council and Covid Committee

Motion made and passed to adjourn @ 8:00pm

Annual meeting is January 17, 2020 via Zoom

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

submitted by Gloria Karl and Doug Spike

St John's Elders:

Doug Spike

Gayle Bauer

Gloria Karl

St John's Spiritual Council

Pastor Lora Sturm

Doug Spike

Gayle Bauer

Gloria Karl

The Annual Congregational Meeting of St John's United Church of Christ will be held on Sunday, January 17 @ 1:00 pm. Due to COVID concerns, the meeting will be held by Zoom only. Although we will not be meeting in person, your attendance is no less important. Please join us on-line at:

<https://umcom.zoom.us/j/95775176785?pwd=aHVJSmkwVFV4WUJJa0tsai91NVp1QT09> or by phone at 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

See you on January 17!

St John's Council

St. John's UCC Cleaning

Committee The St. John's UCC

cleaning committee for the month of January is: The St. John's Council



Second Saturday Quilters

SSQ is open to people of all churches & their friends.
Contact Deb Wille 507-323-4813
or 83159deb@gmail.com



Special notices, Save the dates, Surround in Prayer:

Jan 12 2pm PPP please pray at least 30 minutes-thx
Jan 17 1pm SJUCC Annual Meeting-via zoom
Jan 20 newsletter deadline 1pm MMKC N,5pm council N
Jul 21, 2021 7pm Eagle Center program-SJ
Aug 31-Sept. 10, 2021 UMC General Conference-Mpls
Nov.10-12, 2021 North Central UMC Jurisdiction Conference: Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Election and assignment of bishops occurs.

Fare For All 2020 Pick Up Dates: canceled for now

Food assistance is at The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Divine Mercy Chapter, located at 617 3rd Avenue NW in Faribault for food assistance. If you are willing to volunteer call Kevin at SVdP at 334-2100. The Northfield Community Action Center offers food availability and other assistance in Faribault. Questions? Call or text 507-573-2601 (habla español) **FOOD DELIVERY!** Delivering food boxes in select neighborhoods in Faribault Look for the Hiawathaland bus! Please practice physical distancing when picking up food **FREE! FREE!** Thank you to our funders.

- All Purpose Flour
- Oil
- Rice
- Pasta
- Tomato Sauce
- Lentils
- Pinto Beans
- Canned Corn
- Cereal

*Items subject to change upon availability
SAMPLE BOX* THURSDAYS January 7 & 21
South Central: 1 - 1:45 pm, Four Seasons Apartments: 2:00 - 3:30 pm
FRIDAYS January 8 & 22 Evergreen Estates: 2:45 - 3:30 pm Cannon River Mobile Home Park: 3:45 - 5:00 pm
* fresh produce when available

Food Shelf Items always welcome. Each church has a location where you may bring items. Your help by delivering those items to our local food shelves is greatly appreciated. Your gifts witness to our mission focus for anyone coming to our churches! Thanks for your ministry. Together, we help feed our neighbors. In times of need, our help is needed even more.

Ruth's House thanks the Rice County community for their generous donations, which go to provide basic needs to local families. Donations may be dropped off at Ruth's House in Faribault on Tuesday 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm and Saturday Noon - 2:00 pm. If you would like to offer other items please contact Ruth's House Donations Coordinator, Sandy, at 507-581-1374 or

psvarley@gmail.com, before dropping off. Please contact Suzanne for volunteer opportunities!
suzannef.ruthshouse@gmail.com

Habitat for Humanity Rice County Habitat for Humanity www.habitatricecounty.org 507.323.5167, 204 7th St. W, PMB 128, Northfield, MN 55057
mailto:habitatricecounty@gmail.com

Thanks for your interest in supporting this ministry and mission through prayer. Here are some examples of what to pray for: •Partner Families •Volunteers •Resources •Community When you sign up, you'll be signing up for a whole day. That doesn't mean you have to pray the WHOLE day, but just create some intentional time on that day. Share with your family this opportunity for prayer. Share with your faith community. Share on social media. Or simply do what Matthew 6:6 says, "...whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your father who is in secret..." Or, another version from The Message by Eugene Peterson, "Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense God's grace."

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Minnesota serve children ages 5-14 in Dodge, Rice, Steele and Waseca Counties. Our mission: Contact info: 545 Dunnell Drive, Owatonna 607-451-5922, 322 Central Ave., Faribault, 507-334-0258 202 W Main Str., Kasson, 507-634-4595, Waseca 507-451-5922
www.bbbsouthernmn.org
megan@bbbsouthernmn.org

Remember that our NAMI Family Support group meets every 1st and 3rd Tuesday 7:00-8:30pm in Room 220 at the Northfield Community Resource Center (1651 Jefferson Parkway). (NAMI is National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)

Faribault Area Hospice Foundation is committed to supporting Faribault Area patients receiving Hospice Care. For more information or to apply for assistance, please contact: www.faribaultareahospicefoundation.org or info@faribaultareahospicefoundation.org or call 1-866-506-7049 Or write Faribault Area Hospice Foundation 200 State Avenue, Faribault, MN 55021

Jesusfood is a mission project in the Faribault mall. They have time available to pack meals for children around the world on the 1st Sat of every month starting at 10AM, done before noon. Cost averages about \$60 per person, if you can afford it. But there is not a minimum, so as people can afford, it's what we'll pack. Call for info: 507-469-4357, or email: info@JesusFood.org

Volunteer Opportunities at Allina District One Hospital Contact information for Sharon Jacobson: 507-497-3527 Sharon.jacobson@allina.com Mail Route 77000, 200 State Avenue, Faribault, Minnesota 55021

Honoring Choices There is no cost for this service. To request our involvement: Email: honoringchoices@allina.com

Phone: 507-977-2330 - To obtain an Honoring Choices Health Care Directive: <https://www.honoringchoices.org/health-care-directives/english-directives/22-hcd-long-form-fillable/file>
Contact our office if you would like a health care directive mailed to you. Please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions for program outreach. Pat Heydon
Follow us on Facebook: @honoringchoicesFaribaultOwatonna

Upcoming scriptures, read and reflect to prepare for worship: Year B Jan 3 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS, YEAR B, Jeremiah 31:7-14 Psalm 147:12-20 Ephesians 1:3-14 John 1:(1-9), 10-18 COLORS White Jan10 EPIPHANY/BAPTISM OF THE LORD, YEAR B Genesis 1:1-5 Psalm 29 Acts 19:1-7 Mark 1:4-11 COLORS Gold White Jan17 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY 1 Samuel 3:1-10 Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 1 Corinthians 6:12-20 John 1:43-51 COLORS Green Jan24THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY, YEAR B Jonah 3:1-5, 10 Psalm 62:5-12 1 Corinthians 7:29-31 Mark 1:14-20 COLORS Green Jan31 FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY, YEAR B Deuteronomy 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28 COLORS Green

Service Schedule for 2021: Sundays
(Communion on first Sundays of month)
9:00 AM WORSHIP AT NERSTRAND UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

12 Maple Street, Nerstrand, MN 55053
E-mail: stjohnsuccnumc@live.com
Website: <https://nerstrandumc.org>
Phone: 507.332.4089



10:30 AM WORSHIP AT ST JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

19086 Jacobs Ave, Faribault, MN 55021
E-mail: stjohnsuccnumc@live.com Phone: 5077895766
Website: <https://stjohnsunitedchurchofchrist.info>
Phone: 507.330.0025



All the People, Ministers
Lora Sturm, Pastor
Phone: 507.330.0025 office/ 507.525.4483 cell/
507.452.1448 home
E-mail: pastorlora@live.com
Sabbath on Friday



For surely I know the plans I have for you,
says the Lord, plans for your welfare
and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

JEREMIAH 29:11



January 2021

To the Members of St. John's UCC

The members of St. John's Council have worked very diligently this past year. The pandemic forced us to look at things in a different way. We needed to make some decisions on continuing in our traditional ways versus changes that would make St. John's a viable church. Some of these changes include utilizing technology to provide worship options, approving a new roof via a mail vote and finding a safe means to provide communion. Another change that the council has been discussing is the need to continue the yoking agreement with the Nerstrand United Methodist Church.

There has been a yoking agreement in place with the NUMC since 1969. As you review the enclosed Yoking Agreement you will note the sole purpose of the agreement is share a common minister and share certain operating expenses. The two churches have maintained ties with their separate denominations. St. John's UCC has continued to follow our denomination affiliation, even when served by a Methodist Pastor. The yoking agreement was originally drafted when membership far exceeded the current membership. It was designed for two congregations to share a full time minister. In this time of declining membership and financial uncertainty the council felt it appropriate to review the need to continue the yoking agreement supporting a full time minister.

Here is some information that needs to be shared.

- According to the conference data, there needs to be 100 people attending worship to support a full time minister. (not just members of the church)
- Our current membership as of 1-1-20 was 148 with an average of 30 people in church. (Non pandemic service).

- The minister serving both churches has to keep up to date with both conferences.
- Discussion occurred regarding continuing the yoking agreement but amending it to a part time minister. It was decided that this is not a viable option due to the needs of each church and separate conference.
- Pastor Lora has been involved in these discussions at all times. NUMC has also been involved in the process.
- The current yoking agreement remains in place for 2021

There are some things the council does not know:

- Are we best served by continuing the current yoking agreement with a full time minister?
- If we discontinue the yoking agreement, will we be able to find a part time minister and what will that role look like?
- What do we do with the parsonage if housing is not needed?

This letter is being sent to all members to provide the opportunity to think about the yoking agreement. The council members are asking the member of St. John's to provide some input on this decision. This will be a discussion item on the annual meeting. As with all discussion items there is the potential for a congregation vote regarding the current yoking agreement.

You may direct any questions or comments to Doug Spike (952-239-8671 fluffyyvw@yahoo.com) or Gayle Bauer (507-838-2857 gayleb9@gmail.com) or Gloria Karl (507-351-3542 gkkarl@yahoo.com)

YOKING AGREEMENT

St. John's United Church of Christ

Nerstrand United Methodist Church

Revised Agreement: October 2019

Effective Date 1-1-20

In the interest of God's work, St. John's United Church of Christ and Nerstrand United Methodist Church, have agreed to the sharing of Ministerial Services through a yoked arrangement. It is not the purpose of this Yoking Agreement to join the two churches in any other manner except the sharing of a common minister and the sharing of certain common operating expenses. The two churches wish to maintain their own distinct identities with regards to denominational affiliation and with respect to their individual status as local congregations.

In the Yoking Agreement dated August 10, 1969, both St. John's United Church of Christ and Nerstrand United Methodist Church approved a document of understanding which explains how Ministerial Services will be supported by the churches.

To further accomplish the Yoking Agreement, the following recommendations have been agreed upon:

1. St. John's United Church of Christ (SJUCC) and Nerstrand United Methodist Church (NUMC) will determine a membership ratio, based on membership size at the end of each calendar year. This ratio is subject to annual review. Any further reference to the membership ratio for the calendar year 2020 equals: 69.5% SJUCC and 30.5% NUMC.

2. Pastoral expenses which include the following: cash salary, pension fund, health insurance, parsonage, utilities, continuing education allowance, mileage expense, professional expenses and all other benefits relating to the Pastor's benefit package, will be met in accordance with a ratio determined as follows: 1/7 is based on time spent on worship preparation and divided evenly; 6/7 is based on membership size. This ratio is reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary. For the calendar year 2020 the ratio is as follows: 66.5% SJUCC and 33.5% NUMC.

3. Both churches shall be responsible for the Business phone (507.789.5766) located in the SJUCC office and the cell phone (507.330.0025) provided to the Pastor. The expense shall be shared on a 69.5% and 30.5% ratio, subject to annual review. Personal long-distance calls shall be paid by the Pastor.

4. Office and secretarial support shall be provided as follows: a) Secretarial salary –shared equally, b) Copy Machine agreement and related supplies, including paper – shared equally, c) Internet, postage, office supplies and other related miscellaneous office maintenance will be shared on a 69.5%, 30.5% ratio. When need for new equipment arises, a fair agreement will be reached between churches.

5. With the assumption that the minister will live in SJUCC parsonage, NUMC will pay SJUCC a monthly amount based on the fair rental value of the house as agreed upon by congregations. The

2020 rate of \$900.00 will be reviewed annually. The ratio is as follows: 66.5% SJUCC and 33.5% NUMC.

6. There will be a joint Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) – formerly called the Pastor-Parish (PPR) Committee – consisting of three representatives from each church to serve rotating terms of three years. The pastor will be the seventh member of this committee. This committee will meet at LEAST quarterly. The senior member of the SPRC should be present at regular Church Council or Administrative Board meetings. Chairperson of this committee will be selected annually at the February meeting, alternating among churches.

Other Continued Recommendations Include:

1. Annual review of the Yoking Agreement will be done by the joint SPRC. Any changes advocated will be recommended to the respective church boards, subject to their approval.

2. Sunday service times will be: 9:00am NUMC and 10:30am SJUCC.

3. Special services such as Lenten services, and Thanksgiving will rotate among the two churches, but may be subject to change when shared ecumenically with other churches.

4. Meetings and events that lend themselves should be held jointly when and where possible to consolidate time and effort of the Pastor.

5. If no written notification is received regarding the discontinuing of the Yoking Agreement SIX months prior to January 1, the Yoking Agreement will be extended for the following year.

Other Conditions Regarding the Office of the Pastor:

1. The joint SPRC will be responsible for securing pastoral supply in emergencies and during the Pastor's vacation.

2. When a permanent Pastor is to be called, the SPRC will alternately use the Appointment System of the United Methodist Church or the Call System of the United Church of Christ.

3. When using the Appointment System, the SPRC will accept the appointment made by the Bishop of the United Methodist Church or may ask for reconsideration according to the policy of the United Methodist Church.

4. When using the Call System, the SPRC will interview prospective candidates from a list provided by the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ. Each church can vote to accept or reject the candidate recommended by the joint SPRC.