



FIRST UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH

OCTOBER 2022
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Office hours M-F 9:00 am -1:00 pm
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813 W. Myrtle Steet
Stillwater , MN 55082

Pastor's pause...



*I'll never forget the trouble,
the utter lostness,
the taste of ashes, the
poison I've swallowed.
I remember it all—oh, how
well I remember—
the feeling of hitting the
bottom.
But there's one other thing I
remember,
and remembering, I keep a
grip on hope:
GOD's loyal love couldn't
have run out,
his merciful love couldn't
have dried up.
They're created new every
morning.
How great your
Faithfulness!
I'm sticking with GOD (I say
it over and over).
He's all I've got left.*

Lamentations 3:19-24

Some days no matter what we do, no matter how hard we try, things just do not go the way we want them to. Some days we wake up, get out of bed; only to wish we had stayed in bed.

I remember one particular day, a day when my world turned upside down. Jeff, the man I had been dating off and on for 7 plus years, had committed suicide. After being told by a mutual friend, I didn't know how to feel. Frankly, I was shell shocked. You always hear Christians discussing their accomplishments, their victories over defeat... And I wish I could say that I overcame this challenge in my life without faltering. Instead, I allowed myself to take the blame. Why didn't I talk to him that week? Why didn't I hang in there? He needed me. I let myself fall into an all-encompassing, "blame-a-thon". Every morning I would wake up crying, never knowing the reason for the events that had taken place.

But the reality is Jeff suffered from bipolar disorder. When he was on his meds, we were a powerful team, but when he went off them, things crumbled. Eventually, you get sick and tired of being sick and tired of someone's self-destruction. So, you have to step back. We were still in conversation and loving each other was never the issue. But if someone isn't willing to help themselves, you can't do it for them. It was the latter that took me a while to see.

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Throughout this time of questioning and blame, I never doubted God's power, just myself. But with God's love, the love of my family and friends and a great therapist I was able to push through that rather dark time.

This part of my life I normally don't share often. However, these difficult parts of my life have taught me many things and I think transparency can be valuable for others in similar situations.

It's taught me that God wouldn't give up on me, no matter how deeply I questioned the situation. It taught me that even if I focused on other things, God would still focus on me. And more than anything, God helped me see it was not my fault. It was no one's fault. Jeff was in pain and believed by ending his life, things would be better. I'm not here to debate suicide but I am here to say that God was the higher power that brought me through. I will forever wish that Jeff could also have seen his worth in God's eyes.

Through my own challenges, God has given me the chance to understand what that pain is like, and the wisdom to know that if we trust God, we can heal. If we put our doubt and fear in God's hands, God will guide us back into the light.

A popular question we clergy get is, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" The truth is, I don't know. I don't think there is a divine word that can explain it. But no matter how hopeless things may seem, and no matter how lost you may feel... God is there. Even when you rely on your own strength instead of God's, God will be there. God will always catch you.

PRAYER: Creator God, I pray for healing of my endless sadness and grief that prevents me from living. Help me to see the good in my life and refocus my attention on your will for my life. Guide me to find new ways to cope with my loss that will renew my soul and refill my heart with your eternal love. Amen.



FINANCE SUMMARY ~ Jim Nelson

At the end of August, all church funds were in good shape and our Apportionments are paid in full. We have \$90,272 in the bank. After excellent contributions in August, the General Fund balance is now \$1,139 after being negative last month. We are heading into the Fall in okay financial shape, but it will still be close as to whether we are positive or negative at year end. With your help, we hope to meet all our 2022 financial obligations. Thank you for keeping your pledges up to date and please continue your generosity and promptness until the end of the year.

Work has started on the 2023 Budget, so if you are a committee chair, please start preparing amounts for your committee's 2023 budget. We would like a draft Budget done by October 8th. Finance is starting to plan our 2023 Stewardship Campaign so stay tuned for updates in the next two months. Commitment Sunday will be November 13 when Pledge Cards will be turned in.

Finance committee is still open to creative fund-raising ideas - please contact us with your ideas!



EXCITING NEWS!! COUNTRY STORE REVISITED

November 13th in the Fellowship Hall

Items that have been a hit in the past include:

Gift cards, craft items, baked goods, jewelry, treasures (gently used items)

All donations are appreciated! Call Bev Walmar with questions at 651-770-2770.



SUNNY HILL PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

As you have seen, Sunny Hill Pre-School purchased and installed new playground equipment last month. The new equipment enhances our building facility and is a positive reflection on First United. Historically, First United has not contributed to Sunny Hill's purchase of equipment, but during these difficult times, it would be a nice gesture for us to help Sunny Hill by making an individual contribution to offset their investment. If you want to contribute, please make notation on your check, "Sunny Hill Playground". Please note that you can designate this contribution as a Memorial or Honorarium for a person(s) who is special to you. Thanks in advance for strengthening our ongoing collaboration with Sunny Hill Pre-School.



A big thank-you to the following people who participated in the **Highway Pick-up** on September 10th. Your involvement demonstrated your and the church's commitment to the environment and the community.

Leesa Levy, Paul Skoug and Bruce Lundeen



SCRIP is available! Orders can be placed at Sunday worship services or anytime by email to benj.w.jackson@comcast.net. Payment for email orders can be dropped off at the church during office hours. Scrip doesn't cost, it pays! Stock up on some great gift cards to use for much appreciated HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING.

UMM

Join the United Methodist Men for a monthly devotion, breakfast, discussion, and fellowship. The meeting on October 8th will be at the Lowell Inn at 8:00 am. Contact the church office at office@fumcstillwater.com to join the UMM mailing list.



JOYFUL NOISE



The rehearsals are going well for our Christmas Cantata that will take place on December 18th! We've enlisted the talents of a few members of our string ensemble but are in need of violinists! If you know someone who might be interested, please contact the Music Director or Organist. We'd be so excited if you were to join us for rehearsals each Wednesday evening at 7pm!

MUSIC DIRECTOR ANNOUNCEMENT

It has been an awesome, yet challenging and exciting experience being with you the past four years. Working with the Chancel Choir, the Rivertown Ringers, Open Circle and leading the Worship Committee has been a blessing as I have gotten to know so many of you. However, my sister's passing in 2019, Carl's quintuple bypass surgery in 2020, the pandemic (i.e. Zoom Choir!), three cancer biopsies this past February, and losing both of my parents in the span of ten months has really taken its toll. I realize that I need time to step away. I recognize that what I need right now is to be less of a leader and more of a fully immersed participant in worship, so that I can lean into Christ's comfort to heal, revive and recharge. So, after prayerful consideration and input from my family, I have submitted my resignation as Music Director effective December 31, 2022. Words can only minimally express how much I appreciate all of the support, kindness and Christian love that I have received from the membership and leadership of this church.

Sincerely,

Gaye H. Fisher



OCTOBER

Oct. 2 Monica Basaker; Oct. 3 Dorothy Reeves; Oct. 5 Robert Grogan; Oct. 6 Allison Cossetta, Konnie Helwig, Jeremy Krentz; Oct. 7 Ted Gilbert; Oct. 11 Emily Mayaka,; Oct. 12 Luke Niethammer; Oct. 13 Pat Greupner, Nicole Larson; Oct. 15 Adam Frederick, Korinne Smith; Oct. 19 Linda Ash; Oct. 20 Scott Harvey; Oct. 21 Michelle Clark; Oct. 22 Kelli Auer, Oct. 23 Kathy Holst; Oct. 26 Julie Paukert; Oct. 29 Beverly Palumbo; Oct. 30 Jodi Larson.



AUGUST- THIS MONTH IN MISSION

Please call Linnea Shinn at 651-354-4999 with questions.

We will continue to collect nonperishable foods for Valley Outreach in October. Also, at the end of the month, Missions will be sending a check to Valley Outreach if anyone wants to make a donation as well. Please designate on your check. We are planning on making a donation for November/December in response to a need for mental

health awareness and support. It will be to Family Means or NAMI which is National Alliance for Mental Illness. Thank you, everyone, for your support!

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SUNDAY SERVICES

Reminder: Sunday announcements that you would like on the screen, need to be emailed to Jacqueline (Jack) Fisher by 5:00pm each Friday. Thank you! jcfisher@reality-overwritten.net

WHITE CHRISTMAS AT THE PHIPPS

Now is the time to sign up for the **Sunday, November 20th** - 2:00 pm production of **White Christmas**. (A previous announcement quoted November 29th as the date, but that was incorrect.) Thirty tickets are on hold for our church. Tickets are \$20.00 per person. Please sign up at the Information Center to reserve your ticket. Sign up will close on November 1st. Tickets are to be paid for in ONE check so please write your check to Mary Harcey and give it to her, or leave it in the church office. If you wish to car pool, plan on being at the church by 1:00 pm.



WELCOME BACK TO ADVENTURE AVENUE!

Wednesday, October 12th 5:30 – 7:30 pm, dinner from 5:30 – 6:15



We are bringing Adventure Avenue back and we hope you will join us. It will fall on the **2nd Wednesday of each month** and start back up Wednesday October 12th! This adventure is for the whole church and is full of intergenerational activities. Everything starts with our delicious Wednesday Night dinner.

Then we will have everyone join us for a sing-along. You can then make a Welcoming craft to share with our homebound members. And you can get competitive with a little game of Corn Hole. ~ Cynthia Frederick

TRUNK or TREAT

We will be hosting a TRUNK or TREAT in the front parking lot of the church on Sunday, October 30th from 4-6 pm. This event will help us be visible in the community and provide a safe Trick or Treating event for children. There are 3 different ways you may choose to participate. Take part in all 3 or whatever works for you.

*Decorate the trunk of your vehicle in a fun Halloween / Fall theme. Arrive at the front parking lot by 3:45 and stay until 6:00, passing out candy. Dressing up is not required, but it would add to the fun. Please sign up so we have a count of vehicles. Wrapped Halloween Candy. This can be left in the office anytime prior to the event.

*Help by decorating the signs that will be placed out to advertise the event. These will be set out on tables before and after the Wednesday Night Supper until they are completed.

Administrative Council In Review – Sept 27, 7:00 pm



Meeting Minutes

Twenty people attended the meeting. Chairperson Ben Jackson opened the meeting with a timely devotion about Hopes and Fears.

Outreach: Bonnie Haines

*The Sunny Hill Playground is still being planned for further improvement. Sunny Hill is financing new equipment, but our church is responsible for landscaping which includes removing the stone wall that is there presently. Donations from the congregation toward the project are welcomed.

*The Christmas tree on the west side of the church will again be lit with additional lights being added and be placed all the way to the top this year. Again, donations are welcomed for this project.

*Trunk or Treat – on October 30th – 4:00-6:00. Come one, come all. See details in a separate article.

Worship: Gaye Fisher

*Christmas Eve Service: There will be one Christmas Eve Service this year, with the time to be determined.

*Christmas Day is on Sunday and will be a service of Lessons and Carols.

Building Security: There was consensus that the building will no longer be locked during the church service.

Missions: Linnea Shinn

*The September Food Shelf drive is extended through October with a new emphasis every two months instead of one. Further details will be found in upcoming newsletters.

Finance: Jim Nelson

*Stewardship Campaign will run from October 9th-November 13th. The Pledge Sunday will also include a Country Store fund-raiser. Bev Walmar has agreed to chair that project, but needs lots of donations and workers from the congregation.

Jim announced that the Finance committee continues to welcome more fund-raisers.

Other Business:

*Adventure Avenue is back for the 2nd Wednesday of the month, beginning in October.

*Many committees are looking for more members and ask that people in the congregation consider giving their time and talent to a committee of interest.

The next meeting is October 25th at 7:00 pm.

Submitted by Mary Harcey

WHAT ARE THE YOUNG ADULTS IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY UP TO TODAY?

This month features Kassie Krinke

Kassie graduated from Stillwater in 2016. She attended the University of Minnesota Twin Cities and graduated with a BS in Mechanical Engineering in December of 2020. As part of her schooling, Kassie did a nine month internship at Ecowater Systems in Woodbury. The internship led to a job offer, and in January of 2021 Kassie started working there. Ecowater makes water softeners, and as a test engineer she helps with new product development to ensure that the product works correctly.

Kassie bought a house in Hudson, WI. This summer she planted a vegetable and sunflower garden and is working on landscaping. She and her boyfriend rescued the cutest black longhaired cat and named it Furball. Furball is really feisty, but also sweet. He loves to play, watch the birds, and sleep in the sun.

When Kassie is not working, she enjoys spending time with friends and family. She has learned to crochet and has made shawls, blankets and a 3 dimensional dolphin and a dog. Kassie is an avid reader. She loves Nicholas Sparks' books and is currently reading James Patterson's books. Watching football is also a favorite pastime. Maybe it is a good thing she moved across the river because the Green Bay Packers have her allegiance. Go Pack Go!

A MOMENT IN OUR CHURCH HISTORY - 2005 - 2009

In June of 2005 Rev. Mark Horst was appointed to our church. Mark and his wife, Elisabeth moved to Stillwater on the corner of Laurel and Everett Streets. Mark's bike was a familiar sight parked by the front door of the church, as home and work were about 6 blocks apart.

For our 175th Celebration Mark wrote in a letter to the Congregation, "Stillwater felt like a green refuge to me... it was a refreshing and healing place. Worship was alive and always interesting. And we shared a real hunger for God's presence and direction." While Mark was our pastor we often passed out flyers inviting people to come for a Wednesday night meal, worship, or other activity. We hosted at least 2 neighborhood picnics on National Night Out.

Early in 2009, after receiving several notices about retirement, Mark called the conference to inquire as to why he was receiving these notices. Mark was informed that his years of ministry plus his age added up to enough years to retire. So, at age 54, Mark retired; he and Elisabeth moved to New Mexico, and his hobby of art became a second career.

Those who followed Mark on Facebook enjoyed seeing his painting, soft sculptures, and murals. Four years ago Mark was diagnosed with throat cancer. Mark lost his voice and could only talk with a voice box, but he continued to pursue his love of creating artwork. In late August, Mark's earthly life came to a close. Mark closed his letter to the congregation with the Spanish words, "vaya con dios, or 'go with God.'" We can say the same to Mark - Go With God.

OCTOBER 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 8:00 am AA meeting
2 9:30 am Worship & Facebook Live	3	4 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group	5 10:30 Prayer Shawl 5:30 Dinner 6:00 Adventure Ave 6:00 pm Bells rehearsal 7:00 pm open circle	6	7	8 8:00 am AA meeting 8:00 am UMM breakfast
9 9:30 am outdoor Worship & Facebook Live	10	11 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group	12 10:30 Prayer Shawl 5:30 Dinner 6:00 Adventure Ave 7:00 pm Choir	13 10:00 am Winner's Circle	14	15 8:00 am AA meeting
16 9:30 am Worship & Facebook Live	17	18 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group	19 10:30 Prayer Shawl 5:30 Dinner 6:00 Adventure Ave 6:00 pm Bells rehearsal 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal	20	21 Quilters 11:00 am	22 8:00 am AA meeting
23 9:30 am Worship & Facebook Live	24	25 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group 7:00 pm Ad	26 10:30 Prayer Shawl 5:30 Dinner 6:00 Adventure Ave 6:00 pm Bells rehearsal 7:00 pm Choir rehearsal;	27	28	29 8:00 am AA meeting
30 9:30 am Worship & Facebook Live	31 Halloween 					