



FIRST UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH

APRIL 2023

phone: 651.439.1880

Hours: M-Thr 9-3p, F 9-1pm

office@fumcstillwater.com

813 W. Myrtle Steet

Stillwater, MN 55082

Pastor's pause...

**This entry is by Max Lucado, © September 2018.
Timely...**

Psalm 107:28-30

*²⁸ Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
and he brought them out from their distress;
²⁹ he made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.
³⁰ Then they were glad because they had quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.*



Surviving in the Storm by Pasanthi Amarasekera

“We saw the storm coming. While it was still days away, the predictions chilled our spines and jolted our complacency. “It’s a monster!” “Disaster is not only at our doorstep, but also coming in!” Now it arrives and will it be as vast and terrible as advertised? It promises to pounce, then sit and sit upon vast swaths of our coastland – drenching, driving, and destroying so much of what we love.

Many on the East Coast are fleeing the flooding. And as images of destruction begin to roll across our screens, we are all tempted to worry, wonder and fret. What can be done? Where is God in the midst of this disaster? Where is God in the midst of the storm that threatens your own life?

May I remind us of one strong anchor that is hooked to at least four unbreakable lifelines? You see, God is a God of promises. From the first chapter of the Bible, Scripture makes a case for the dependability of God. Nine times the text reiterates “God said.” And without exception when God spoke, something happened. By divine decree there were light, land, beaches, and creatures. We are left with one conclusion: God’s word is sure, and God’s promises can be trusted. What God says happens.

After 40 years in ministry, I’ve seen a lot of storms. And I’ve learned that in turbulent times like this, there is nothing more secure than the anchor of God’s promises. “We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure” (Hebrews 6:19).

Could you use some **hope** in the aftermath of this storm, and in other choppy seas you may be facing? Perhaps the wind of change and challenge is blowing in your faith, your family, or finances. Anchor deep into the unshakable promises of God. And hold on tight to these four lifelines – they can withstand the waves of worry and difficulty in your life.

Hang tight, God gets you! God's been there. God's been here – and God understands your pain. The stunning idea is simply this: God, for a time, became one of us. Does this promise matter? If you ever wonder if God listens, he does. If you ever wonder if the Uncreated Creator can, in a million years, comprehend the challenges you are facing, then ponder long and hard the promise that Jesus is “able to understand our weaknesses” (Hebrews 4:15).

Overcome Despair with Prayer. When life overwhelms, pray to the one who is in charge, and know that God is praying for you. Will God do what you ask? Perhaps. Or perhaps he will do more than you imagine. Stand firmly on the promise that “when a believing person prays, great things happen” (James 5:16). And ponder this truth: Jesus, right now, at this moment, in the midst of whatever trouble you are facing, is speaking on your behalf. He is calling out to the Heavenly Father. He is advocating for a special blessing to be sent your way. You do not fight the wind and waves alone. Every day he speaks up for you. “He always lives to intercede for [us]” (Romans 8:34).

Pull together when life comes apart. In times of extreme challenge, we can divide or we can unite. One of the beautiful things that can emerge from times of trouble is extravagant compassion and care for our neighbors – crossing lines and building bridges. Our pain bears fruit if it reminds us that everyone has value, and we were created by God, in God's image, for God's glory (Genesis 1:26).

Evil exists, but it does not win! Yes, we'd rather have a storm-free life, but we can count on ole' slue-foot stirring up trouble and fear. Take heart, God has overcome! The evil one's days are numbered. So, in those moments when all that is good appears to lose, you do not need to worry. Remind the evil one, “The God who brings peace will soon defeat Satan and give you power over him” (Romans 16:20).

Hold fast to these lifelines and ask yourself this key question: Is what I'm anchored to stronger than what I'll go through? Sometimes it may be a calamity that thousands are facing together, or it may be a personal battle that no one else even knows you are dealing with. But God knows. God knows and God cares. And God wants to buoy you in the day-to-day difficulties and guide you home to safe harbor. When the storm hits, anchor to no one but God. Storms will come, my friend. But when they do, filter them through the promises of God. And since God's promises are unbreakable, your hope will be unshakable.”

PRAYER: *Thank You, God, that You are victorious over every trouble and obstacle. Thank You for overcoming sin and death. Please help me to resist any darkness that I may face today. As a result of Your death on a cross, I know that I can have victory, and we can walk strong in Your peace. In the name of Jesus, the Christ we pray. Amen.*

AD COUNCIL MINUTES IN REVIEW

March 21, 2023 meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Ben Jackson. Eighteen people were present.

Outreach: Bonnie Haines The Chili Cook-off for Saturday May 6 is in the planning stages and many volunteers will be asked to be a part of helping with this fundraiser.

Worship: Leesa Levy Leesa announced that she is working on streamlining the Worship Committee. She will develop a proposal to bring to the Administrative Council at the next meeting.

Nominating Committee: Ben Jackson made a motion that at the April 30, Church Conference Nancy Nelson be recommended to be Chair of the Staff Parish Relations Committee and Sue Niethammer as Vice Chair. Mike Ptacek will be asked to serve on Finance. Motion approved.

Youth Council: Linda Ash- Dixie Scruggs has resigned from her Youth Director position. Both the Gayme Night and Queer Quest will be meeting in a neutral location in the future. The Youth Council will be meeting to discuss next steps.

Finance, Mark Ridgway and Jim Nelson -Our finances are in okay shape at the present time. All apportionments are up to date. The UMW checking account was closed out and the \$1,700 in that account has been put into a Women's Ministries account and how it is spent will be determined by the Winner's Circle which is our only Circle at this time. It was announced that the Lily Lake meal fund brought in \$296.00 and will be distributed by the Mission Committee. It was also reported that the Presbyterian Church is now supporting Lily Lake School and our church will be looking for other schools to partner with. **A new Finance Secretary needed.** A big thank you to Joanie Sherman for an excellent job for the past three years. The Finance Committee is looking for a volunteer to take the position. The tasks are quite streamlined where weekly data entry time is about 20 minutes while month-end tasks and Quarterly statements take longer. Bruce Clark is familiar with Power Church software and Jonnie agreed to help with the transition as well. Please contact Jim Nelson if you are interested in volunteering.

Prayer Chain discussion: Mary Harcey brought up the fact that we no longer have anyone reporting our Joys and Concerns to the office. Leesa Levy suggested that each week we ask those who are sharing during the church service to write out what they shared during the service and then place the request in a container that will be placed at the back of the sanctuary. The written request will be given to Denice in the office to send out to all who are on the prayer chain. This will be announced in church. Prayer request cards are in the pew holders.

Positioning of the Flags: The last thing on the agenda was a discussion about the positioning of the flags in our church. The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church does not prescribe a policy for flag display by a congregation. A decision on the policy for display of flags at FIRST UNITED will be established at an all-church Charge (Church) Conference that will be held on Sunday April 30 at 10:45 am after church. The Administrative Council agreed that the flags should be somewhere within the church building. After several options were considered the Council agreed to have two options put forth at the April meeting. 1. Flags in the altar area all the time. 2. Flags placed on either side of the sanctuary entrance doors in the gathering space all the time. The Council then voted to recommend the flags be placed on either side of the sanctuary doors just before entering. The vote passed on a 12-2 vote in favor. The two options will be voted on by all members who attend the April 30 meeting.

The next meeting will be on May 16 and 7:00 in the Fellowship Hall.

Submitted by Mary Harcey

CARING MINISTRY TEAM

The Caring Ministries Team provides support to those in need in the form of meals, soup, grief support, greeting cards and flowers at Easter and Christmas. New last month is a program called Conversation Partners. This is designed to connect with those at home or a care facility that are isolated and in need of social interaction. Being a “conversation partner” means that you will be willing to visit or call one of the 13 folks on the list. If you are interested to serve in this way, please contact Linda Ash or the church office. There are NO MEETINGS INVOLVED.

Coming in May, at home communion will be brought to those at home or in a care facility wishing to receive it. Please call the church office if you are interested.

RECONCILING COMMITTEE

Cynthia Frederick, cynthfred@gmail.com

The Reconciling Committee is inviting the church to a movie night, Sunday, April 23, 6:00 – 9:00. The movie will be one of several recommended by the Reconciling Ministries Network of the United Methodist Church. There will be time for the movie and discussion afterward.

The committee is also looking into a book study to begin in May and go through June. In May, we will also have a panel discussion, after church, of congregation members who are LGBTQIA+ and members who are parents of LGBTQIA+ adult children. Our hope is that this will help the congregation understand why this IS an issue our church needs to look at and learn more about. We want to be a growing church and, we want to be welcoming to young adults and families. The committee sees not being welcoming to the LGBTQIA+ community is a big part of the younger generation not seeing the relevance of church in their lives. We think church IS important, we think God’s love IS important and we think making sure people feel welcome IS important.

A question from The Reconciling Committee Question & Answer box (in the Information Center):

How would the church becoming Reconciling change my life in the church?

Answer: There is nothing that we are required to do differently if we become a Reconciling Congregation. Right now, we are gathering information from congregation members at our one on one meetings and trying to share information with the congregation through various events and the newsletter. Our hope is that we can look at ourselves, as a church community, and see what are the changes we could make to ensure anyone new who comes through our doors feels welcome. Down the road, if we vote and it passes, we would still look at what changes we want to make to help anyone new feel welcome and be more inclusive of the LGBTQIA+ community. But making changes to be more welcoming of new members is something the church has been looking at and trying for the past 15 years, as our membership has declined. Over the 175 years that we have been a Church, change has happened in the church and change will continue to occur. By looking into the issue of becoming Reconciling, we are seeking to proclaim we believe God loves everyone. The more we come to understand the hurt that shutting one group out causes – OUR hearts will change and God’s love will flow more deeply through us and out into the community. That is the change I believe will happen as we seek to learn more about the Reconciling Ministry and becoming a Reconciling Congregation. We will come to live God’s love for all people.

TRUSTEES

Trustees will meet on Tuesday April 18th at 6:30 PM in the Wesley Room. We will discuss the proposed retaining wall, spring cleanup and other items that may come up.

ELECTRONIC GIVING

This is a reminder that our FIRST UNITED website offers Electronic Giving using a credit or debit card - just click on the GIVE button in upper right corner, set up an account, follow the prompts, and designate from list below where you want your money to go:

- General Fund
- Capital Fund
- First United Music Ministry
- UMCOR
- Valley Outreach
- Emma Norton
- Simpson House
- Hope for Journey Home
- Family Means
- Sunny Hill Nursery

E-giving is a fast and secure contributing option that reduces administrative costs while allowing more of every dollar to fund the important work we are called to do. Please consider this option if it works for you, and contact Jim Nelson if you have questions.

WINNERS CIRCLE

The Winner's Circle will be meeting at 10AM on Thursday, April 13th. The program is "In Our Own Voice", a presentation by NAMI (National Association of Mental Ill-



THE BELL CHOIR

The bell choir is back rehearsing on Wednesdays at 6pm. Talk to Kathy Hartman if you'd like to join.

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group will meet April 7 at noon in the Fellowship Hall! Beginners are welcome and there is no lack of helpful advice (if you desire it). Contact the church office at office@fumcstillwater.com to join the Bridge Group mailing list.



ALEX FREDERICK Eagle Scout ceremony and reception

Please join the Frederick family as we celebrate Alex becoming an Eagle Scout. Alex Frederick Eagle Scout ceremony and reception Sunday, April 2nd, 1:00 – 3:00, in the First UMC Fellowship Hall for a brief ceremony at 1:30pm

WORSHIP COMMITTEE URGENT Need for Tech Help with Sunday Services

The Tech Team has lost several members in the last couple of months and is now running with a minimum crew of 3 people. We typically have 3 people running the equipment each worship service. If one person is not able to assist with a worship service, we may not be able to send our worship service out to Facebook Live. The 35 to 40 people who tune into Facebook Live every week would not be able to view our worship service. Ideally, the Tech Team should be made up of 8 to 10 people. These 8 to 10 people will be trained on each of the 3 pieces of equipment used during a worship service. Once trained, they will be added to the rotation to cover 1 of the pieces of equipment on Sunday morning or during one of our special services. Our goal is to have enough Tech Team people to cover every piece of equipment once or twice a month. We are looking for men, women, and teenagers to help fill out our tech team. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer to assist with our worship service, please contact Bruce Clark, Amy Gustafson, or Bonnie Haines. Thank you for considering being a member of the Tech Team.



THIS MONTH IN GIVING

Through the month of April, we will be collecting paper products for Emma Norton Services. You may put your donations on the Missions shelf in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you.

UMM

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



WHAT ARE OUR YOUNG ADULTS UP TO TODAY?

Maddie Sutton (née Leines) graduated from Hudson High School in 2010 and attended the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Archaeology. She then earned a Master of Science degree in Anthrozoology from Canisius College, during which she worked at the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, a horse barn, Animal Ark No-Kill Shelter in Hastings, and the Science Museum of Minnesota.

At the Science Museum, Maddie cleaned animal bones for the biologist, processed archaeological remains of animals from a site in Red Wing, MN, and worked in the exhibits. During her time at the Science Museum she met and started dating Neal Sutton, a fellow nerd and science enthusiast. In May 2019 Neal and Maddie were married in a beautiful ceremony here at FUMC of Stillwater. Maddie currently works as a Shift Lead/ Veterinary Assistant at Banfield Pet Hospital, and Neal is a manager at the Science Museum of Minnesota. They bought a house built in 1880 in St. Paul, MN, where they live with a capricious tortoiseshell cat named Arya, an enthusiastic Boston Terrier/Black Lab dog named Denna, and an adorable new baby! In December 2022, Maddie and her husband Neal welcomed a baby boy named Leif, whom they love dearly. They couldn't be happier and more excited to be parents! Maddie loves to sing to Leif and to spend quality time outside with him and Denna. In addition to being a Mom, Maddie enjoys spending time with her family in Hudson, WI, reading Stephen King novels and books about animals and ancient Egypt, and playing tabletop and video games with her husband and friends.

A MOMENT IN HISTORY - 25 YEARS AGO

The Annual Report of 1998 tells that a Musical Drama was performed beginning on Palm Sunday and concluded on Easter Sunday. It was called, "Share the Good News: He Is Risen." Several actors from the congregation joined the Sr. Choir for this event. Maybe you were part of this performance or you were one observing the Holy Week events from a pew.



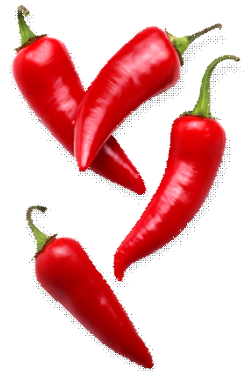
APRIL

Apr. 1 Sharon Speich; Apr. 4 Sandy Garvin; Apr. 5 Toni Harvey, Earle Kask, Katie Leifeld; Apr. 6 Spencer Roll; Apr. 8 Margaret Tulgren; April 11 Geanne Jepsen; Apr. 12 Ryan Bastyr; Apr. 16 Kiel Auer, Olivia Meline; Apr. 21 Katelynn Wright; Apr. 22 Alan Butterfield; Apr. 23 Vicki Anderson, Alexander Eitzman, Jessica Higgles; Apr. 25 Keith Wright; Apr. 30 Ashley Anderson.



Wrapping All People in God's Love

Chili Cook-Off & Contest



Saturday, May 6, 4-7:00pm
(While supplies last**)**
Chili flights available too!

Join us to:

- **Eat-in or take-out!**
- **Vote for the best tasting chili!**

We're at the corner of
Myrtle & Greeley St., Stillwater, MN
Call or email before May 6 to reserve your Chili!!

651-439-1880

Email: fumcstillwater@gmail.com

*****Cash or check to First UMC*****



APRIL 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 8:00 am AA meeting
2 9:30 am Worship & Facebook Live 10:45 Open Circle 1pm Alex Frederick Eagle Scout Ceremony	3	4 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group 7pm Zoom Craft	5 10:30 am Prayer Shawl Group 12:00 Centering prayer 5:30 pm Dinner 6pm Bells Rehearsal	6 I am Lenten Study	7	8 8:00 am AA meeting 8:00 am UMM breakfast
9 9:30 am worship & Facebook Live	10	11 9:30 am Bible 10:30 am Martha Group 7:00 pm Zoom Craft	12 10:30 am Prayer Shawl Group 12:00 Centering prayer 5:30 pm Dinner 6pm Bells Rehearsal 7pm Choir “	13 10:00 am Winners Circle	14 10:00 am Quilting	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 6:00 pm SPRC 7:00 pm Ad Council 7:00 pm Zoom Craft	19 10:30 am Prayer Shawl Group 12: 00 Centering prayer 5:30 pm Dinner 6pm Bell Rehearsal 7pm Choir Rehearsal	20	21	22 8:00 am AA meeting
23 8:45 am Chancel Choir 9:30 am Worship & Facebook Live Chambers baptism	24	25 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group Trimbo funeral TBD	26 9:30 am Bible Study 10:30 am Martha Group 6pm Bell Rehearsal 7pm Choir	27	28	29 8:00 am AA meeting
30 9:30 am Worship & FB Live 10:45 All Church Charge Conf						