



# FIRST UNITED

## METHODIST CHURCH

November, 2024

Office Hrs.: M-Th, 9AM-4PM

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### PASTOR'S PAUSE NOVEMBER 2024



For most Americans, Thanksgiving is a joyous day of celebration. It is a time when we gather around a table that is overflowing with turkey, stuffing, potatoes, pies, and all sorts of delicious foods. It is a time for football, parades, and all-around mirth.

As Christians, Thanksgiving is a time to reflect and give thanks to God for abounding love and faithfulness to us.

For many, however, Thanksgiving brings about vastly different emotions. It is a time of stress, anxiety, and depression. It reminds them of their mistakes and imperfections. Thanksgiving is not a thankful holiday for these people.

Why is that? What is it about this holiday or this time of year that causes these emotions?

I often think about these questions as I mentally prepare myself for the stress of Thanksgiving, and the main answer I come back to is societal expectations. When I consider the holidays and what society has told me they look like, it is

overwhelming. The perfectly set tables brimming with food. The lavish decorations, and perfectly cleaned house. And back when my kids were small, the perfectly behaved children. The list goes on.

These expectations are not anything new. It reminds me to look back at the story of Mary and Martha. (Read Luke 10:38-42).

Two sisters seeking to enjoy being in the presence of Jesus. Enter the expectations. Mary casts aside the expectations of a host and simply sits at Jesus feet. Martha, however, seeks to be a good host while also wanting to be a part of the festivities. In most teaching and sermons, Martha is portrayed as a busybody and complainer. However, I believe that what she is experiencing is very real. She wants to live up to what society has said is a good host. She wants that PERFECT Thanksgiving.

I think that when Jesus tells her that Mary has chosen what is better, he is inviting her to forget the expectations and simply be with him. He isn't telling her that she is wrong or that she is worse than Mary. He is telling her that it is okay if the dishes wait, it is okay if the turkey is dry.

**(Pastor's Pause continued)**

Thanksgiving is a time to simply be reminded that Jesus loves us. We give thanks to God, not just because of the food, decorations, or visiting guests, but simply because God loves us! Right where we are at. Questions to Ponder: What are some of the stresses that you experience during Thanksgiving? How do you deal with your stress during the holidays?

*PRAYER: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." I bring my thanks to You, trusting in Your peace that surpasses understanding. Amen.*



**FALL BACK**

This year, that date will fall on Nov. 3, with clocks rolling back one hour at 2 a.m. While this means sunset will jump backward, it also means an extra hour of sleep, which is likely welcome news!

**RECONCILING TASK FORCE Cynthia Frederick, Chair**

The Committee is sponsoring two educational sessions. The first, titled 2SLGBTQA+ 101, was held on Sunday, Oct. 13, right after church. The presenter was Matt Lewellyn-Otten, (he/him, they/them) Associate Director of Religious Organizing at OutFront Minnesota. The second class will be on Sunday, November 17 right after church.

Please feel free to bring your thoughts and questions to the Reconciling Committee, made up of: Cynthia Frederick, Patsy Bellman, Sharry Swann, Lizzie Bellman, Mike Ptacek, and Pastor Jenny Lind Larsen. Also, consider joining the committee, as we seek to live into God's plan for us.



**WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

The next Worship Committee meeting is November 7 at 4:00 pm. We are looking for one more "at large" member. Anyone interested in the committee should talk to Pastor Jenny or Leesa Levy.

## WEDNESDAY SUPPERS

Everyone is invited to eat supper at the church on Wednesday evenings at 5:30. This month there will only be 3 weekly meals (November 6, 13, and 20) since the day before Thanksgiving (Nov. 27) is a week off. The next Potluck will be in January of 2025.



## SNEAK PEAK FOR ADVENT—A REQUEST

Just a reminder that we will be collecting all kinds of different Nativities from our congregation to have on display during Advent. If you have one to share, please bring it to the church office by the Friday after Thanksgiving. Please also write up a little history about your set. Thanks so much.



## SCRIP IS AVAILABLE!

The Scrip Order Schedule is posted on the church website homepage under Announcements and on the church Information Center. The next order will be placed on November 10. Orders can be placed after Sunday worship services or anytime by email to the church office at [fumcstillwater@gmail.com](mailto:fumcstillwater@gmail.com). Order blanks are available at the church Information Center or in the office. Payment for email orders can be dropped off at the church during office hours.



## BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group will meet November 1 at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Beginners are welcome! Contact the church office at [fumcstillwater@gmail.com](mailto:fumcstillwater@gmail.com) to join the Bridge Group mailing list.



## UNITED METHODIST MEN (UMM)

Join the United Methodist Men for a monthly devotion, breakfast, free range discussion, and fellowship. The November 9 meeting will be at the Lowell Inn at 8 a.m. Contact the church office at [fumcstillwater@gmail.com](mailto:fumcstillwater@gmail.com) to join the UMM mailing list.



## CARING MINISTRIES TEAM

The Caring Ministries Team supports our church family who are in need in times of loss, sadness, illness, or loneliness in the form of food, visits, cards, Communion, or calls. We appreciate all of our volunteers who either do a one-time outreach or are part of the ongoing planning team. If you would like to be an occasional supporter or a monthly team member, please call the church office. Our next meeting will be in the middle



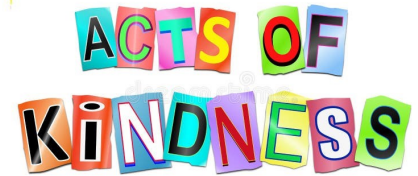


# ACT OF KINDNESS AND THOUGHTFULNESS AWARD

## Announcing our NOVEMBER Winner...

### JIM NELSON

Staff Parish Relations Committee has selected Jim Nelson as November's Positivity Award recipient. Jim works tirelessly around First United in his efforts to sustain our church. He has served as our Finance Chair for many years, organized our money counters & served as a counter himself. Now he is the treasurer for FIRST UNITED. He has been a driving force for the Festa de Pasta fundraiser & is doing the same for the Chili Cook-off fundraising event. Both of these events require a lot of organizational skills! Jim is a choir member, Open Circle member, usher, liturgist, and tech team member. It is obvious that Jim cares very deeply about the congregation of FIRST UNITED and we want to thank him for all his dedication & hard work!



## TRUNK OR TREAT HIGHLIGHTS

The front church parking lot was a buzz of activity with children and families. 16 vehicles passed out treats to 115 plus children. Trunks were decorated with Halloween or other fun themes. Some included a game (Spin the Twister spinner to see what treat you get.) Jim came with his apple press for the children to make apple cider. Avis reigned over the campfire putting marshmallows on long handled forks for roasting. Skeletons and a ghost appeared on the front lawn. Mary heated apple cider for all the workers. The candy that so many people donated was all handed out. Thank goodness some of us brought our Thursday, Halloween night stash along just in case it was needed, because it came in handy. Last year we had 73 children visit, so we prepared for an optimistic 100 children. What a pleasant surprise it was to surpass that number!



## YOUTH MINISTRY

The Youth Council welcomes anyone that would like to be part of this ministry to join either as a member of the Youth Council, a mentor for one of our youth, or a one-time supporter of an activity. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, November 20th, prior to or during the Wednesday night meal.

Youth activities during November will include assisting at the Chili Dinner on November 14th. December activities will include a service project and a fun event, to be determined.

## HISTORIC MEMORIES

The first Sunday in November is when we have typically celebrated All Saints Sunday, recognizing those in our church family who have died in the last year and dedicated memorials that were given in their memory. The fall of the year is also a time when this church has many anniversaries that we can celebrate. Here is a listing of some of the Anniversaries for the fall of 2024.

1869 - 155 years since the Third Street Church was dedicated

1929 - 95 years since the church's Diamond Jubilee Celebration

1929 - 95 years since the first confirmation class for this congregation

1949 - 75 years since the first annual event that later became "Boom Town"

1979 - 45 years since the 125th Anniversary Observance of the building of the first church

1984 - 40 years since stained glass windows in the east and west lofts were dedicated

2004 - 20 years since the church's lighted sign was dedicated

## HELP WANTED:

Many of us are in the de-cluttering time of our lives. I find myself needing to de-clutter my schedule so am asking for someone to step forward and try out a new "job".

For several years I have been responsible for purchasing all the coffee used at the church as well as the juice and cookies used on Sunday mornings. This is all paid for by the people who contribute to the basket that is out on Sunday mornings. The "job" also includes a little book keeping by getting the money and paying yourself back. If you are willing to accept the position, please let me know. Thanks so much.

Mary Harcey - 651-439-7363 harceydm@comcast.net.



### **NOVEMBER**

Nov. 3 Avis Gilbert, Jim Higgs; Nov. 4 Bruce Lundeen; Nov. 5 Freya Haugen; Nov. 9 Jim Nelson; Nov. 11 Phyllis Green; Nov. 12 Mike Cossetta; Nov. 19 Cathy Schewe, Nov. 21 Cari Myhra, Guia Payayno; Nov. 22 Cleo Haugen, Wilma Terwilliger; Nov. 26 Zach Feinberg, Kelsey Nelson; Nov. 27 Frank Anderson

# WOMEN OF FAITH

Women of Faith United On November 14th at 10:00 our circle women have agreed to come and help with the set up for The Chili Meal and Country Store Boutique. We will not have a regular meeting this month since it falls on the day of the meal. Please come and Share in fellowship and giving that extra hand to make the fundraiser a success.



## MISSIONS - Holiday Hope

Community Thread sponsors the program called Holiday Hope. It helps families with Christmas shopping. In the past families have been sponsored by organizations and families. Through the years it was determined that helping families by supplying gift cards and letting them do the shopping has worked well.



Our church's Mission for the month of November is partnering with Community Thread and encouraging our congregation to donate Walmart Gift cards which will then be delivered to Community Thread. There is now a Christmas tree in the gathering space with slip that you can take that will remind you to purchase a gift card. Ben Jackson will be happy to have you order a card ASAP so he can get in an order on November 10. Otherwise you can purchase them at Walmart. Cards should be dropped off at the office, or in the collection plate by the end of November. Thanks so much.

## MUSIC

Hello and Happy Thanksgiving to All! This Sunday, November 3, is All Saints Day and we are pleased to have Mike Breidenbach assisting the worship service on bagpipes. The chancel choir has started work on the cantata chosen for this year's Christmas celebration. It will be performed on December 15 during the 10:00 am service. We will have quite a full instrumental ensemble accompanying, and hope to see everyone attending for this beautiful musical selection. The River Town Ringers are back in action for the fall and have planned music to share for both November and December. Anyone who would like to try their hand at playing bells, please let Leesa know - we are always looking for new members!



## HOPE TO SEE YOU ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14!

### Chili Cook-Off

So tasty! So good! Classic to Gourmet! Tell your family, friends and Neighbors. See next page for details.



### Country Store and Boutique

Unique hand crafted items, delicious baked goods, homemade treats, gift baskets, and surprises. Start your Christmas shopping early!

Donations welcome - for information contact Kathy Rundquist or Nancy Nelson.

