



FIRST UNITED

METHODIST CHURCH

APRIL, 2025

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

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Stillwater, MN 55082

PASTOR'S PAUSE APRIL 2025



Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

Psalm 90:19

“The first love says: “You are loved long before other people can love you or you can love others. You are accepted long before you can accept others or receive their acceptance. You are safe long before you can offer or receive safety.” Home is the place where that first love dwells and speaks gently to us. It requires discipline to come home and listen, especially when our fears are so noisy that they keep driving us outside of ourselves. But when we grasp the truth that we already have a home, we may at last have the strength to unmask the illusions created by our fears and continue to return again and again and again” – Henri Nouwen

The adage, *home is where the heart is* certainly rings true for many of us. The smells, sights and sounds that remind us of that special place where we grew up or visited as a child, never fully goes away. In fact, as I get older, those memories become more pronounced.

But that is not the home the Psalms nor Henri Nouwen is referring to. Albeit, lovely the images we remember whether it be a childhood home or a church home, it is not the building that matters most, but the love of and from God that is our true home, our true center.

As we go forward in this Easter season, may we be intentional about opening our doors and hearts to those who do not have a home whether it be literally and/or figuratively. That we do our best work not in a building, but out in the world with the open heart that God gave us, and to be an advocate for those in need.

PRAYER: *Thank you, God for being my home base. Remind me that a building doesn't fill me up, but the presence of the Holy Spirit will - no matter where I am. I want to be so filled with Your love—love for You and love for others—that it will overflow and bless the lives of **all** your children. Amen.*

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE (April 13 to April 20)

Sunday, 4/13 Palm Sunday Service 10 am

Wednesday, 4/16 Wednesday Night Meal 5:30 pm

Thursday, 4/17 Maundy Thursday Communion 6:30 pm

Friday, 4/18 Tenebrae Service 7 pm

Sunday, 4/20 7:30 am Easter Outdoor "Sunrise" Service (at Anita Carter's home) &

Easter Service 10 am, Easter egg hunt to follow the service



HOLY WEEK

WOMEN OF FAITH

Women of Faith United will meet on Thursday April 10 at 10:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Our hostesses will be Kathy Rundquist and Diane Jackson. Please join us for fellowship and a surprise program. All are welcome.



APRIL

Apr. 1 Sharon Speich; Apr. 4 Diana Florey, Sandy Garvin; Apr. 5 Toni Harvey, Katie Leifeld; Apr. 6 Spencer Roll; Apr. 8 Margaret Tulgren; April 11 Geanne Jepsen; Olivia Meline; Apr. 21 Katelynn Wright; Apr. 23 Vicki Anderson, Alexander Eitzman, Jessica Higgles; Apr. 25 Keith Wright; Apr. 30 Ashley Anderson.

ANNUAL SPRING CHURCH CLEANUP

Mark your calendar that on Saturday, May 10 you can help clean up the church. We will start at 9:00am and will do outside and inside work. No signup required, just show up. Bring any equipment you may need. We will finish up around noon. If you have any questions, please contact Tom Ash or the office.



HIGHWAY PICKUP



Barring the unforeseen, the highway pick up will take place at 9:30am on Saturday, May 3. As usual we will assemble in the Fellowship Hall for refreshments before we set out. Contact Bruce Lundeen or the office if you have questions.

SCRIP IS AVAILABLE!

The Scrip Order Schedule is posted on the church website homepage <https://fumcstillwater.com/> under Announcements and on the church Information Center. The next order will be placed on May 4. Orders can be placed after Sunday worship services or anytime by email to the church office at 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.



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UNITED METHODIST MEN (UMM)

Join the United Methodist Men for a monthly devotion, breakfast, free range discussion, and fellowship. The April 12 meeting will be at the Lowell Inn at 8 a.m. Contact the church office at fumcstillwater@gmail.com to join the UMM mailing list.



ACT OF KINDNESS AND THOUGHTFULNESS AWARD

Announcing our **APRIL Winner...LEESA LEVY!!!**

Hebrews 13:7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.



When I think of Leesa Levy, I not only see a talented teacher, director and musician, but an amazing servant for Christ. Since arriving at First UMC she has been committed to creating great music as well as growing our music ministry within the community. By connecting us in a deeper way with Sunny Hill Preschool as well as supporting our new partnership with New Heights School, we have seen some revitalization

come forth here at First. She is a go-getter and truly invested wherever there is a need. Whether here in the building or outside these church walls, she has exemplified the hands and feet of Christ in all she does. We are blessed. Thank you Leesa for who you are and all you do!

Pastor Jenny

A LOOK BACK IN OUR HISTORY By Patsy Bellman

1995 - 30 Years Ago

Our Senior Choir under the leadership of Kathy Hartman joined with the choir from White Bear Lake UMC under the leadership of Elaine Hill (former music director and pastor's wife at our church,) to perform "Requiem". It was presented on Maundy Thursday at our church and on Good Friday at the White Bear Lake UMC.

EASTER EVENT FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

Saturday, April 12 10:00 - 11:30 Downstairs in the Sunny Hill rooms

This event is designed for preschoolers and will include a time to make some crafts, play a game, receive a gift, hear a story, and end with an Easter Egg Hunt. Sunny Hill families have all been invited, church families with preschoolers are invited and church members with preschool grandchildren are invited to bring the grandkids or have the parents bring them.



YOUTH AND FAMILY COUNCIL

Youth and Family ministries was recently developed to combine nursery school, Sunday school, and Youth Council and serves to develop programs birth through high school.

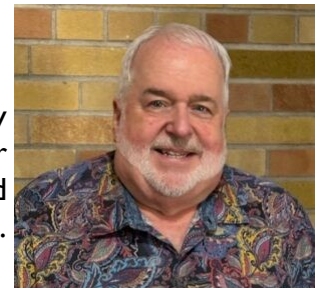
- The Nursery is open on an as-needed basis. Nursery volunteers are listed at the ushers stand and at the Welcoming Table for anyone coming on a Sunday morning asking for nursery care.
- Children's Church is provided on Sunday when Sunny Hill is performing during the last 30-40 minutes of the service. Otherwise, children are invited to stay in church, view and/or participate in the Children's message, and access activity bags located outside the Sanctuary.
- Youth
 - o Confirmation for youth grades 7-9 weekly on Wednesdays with Pastor Jenny.
 - o The Youth had a movie and pizza night on Friday, March 21. They made their own pizzas and saw Moana 2
 - o April 12 – youth will participate in craft fair and Easter egg hunt with Sunny Hill.
 - o April 20 – Youth will host an Easter egg hunt for younger children after the service.
 - o Spring clean-up on a day to be determined.
 - o Next meeting, Thursday May 22 at 7pm.

Anyone interested in being involved with Youth and Family Ministries, please contact the church office.



SPRC

The Staff Parish Relations Committee is very happy to announce that Gregory Schroeder has been hired. Gregory joined our staff on April 1 and will serve as our organist/accompanist for the months of April & May. June 1 Gregory has been hired to become our Director of Music Ministry. Gregory has a lot of experience & talent. We are excited to add him to our staff & our church family!!



CARING MINISTRIES TEAM

The Caring Ministries Team met on March 27 to evaluate the recent needs of our congregation, so that we could provide care through our meal and soup ministries, card ministry, Communion outreach, or grief support. If anyone knows of a member or friend who would benefit from any of these support systems, please contact the church office.

The Caring Ministries Team supports friends and members of our church family who are in need during 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.

Next Caring Ministries meeting is Thursday, May 8 at 10:30 AM.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Would You Be Willing To Help? The Welcome Table is a place to meet and greet people. As the chairman of this mission, I am wishing for more people to sign up at the information center to do a Sunday at the table or back door. There are directions located at the table to guide you as to how we welcome new people with a gift bag. Then Pastor Jenny and I follow up with them after their visit. Please consider signing up to give us a hand to reach out to guests. Thanks, Ann Haraldson

AD COUNCIL BRIEFS

1. Gregory Schroeder will serve as Organist/Accompanist starting April 1 and will transition to Director of Music Ministry June 1.
2. Trustees are studying alternatives for 1) Front door keypad and lock system and 2) Addition of an ADA compliant bathroom.
3. Reconciling Committee has distributed a survey and requests feedback on future activities. Reconciling is planning decorations for Pride Month in June.
4. Youth and Family Ministry has activities planned including Pizza Night, Mother's Day Flower distribution, Feed Our Starving Children event, and Movie night.
5. Pledge receipts are on track with the projected value for the month. FIRST UNITED has received one of two financial bequests from the estate of Dorothy Reeves.
6. FIRST UNITED/Sunny Hill will again participate in the Lumberjack Day Parade on July 20.
7. FIRST UNITED hosted the Fourth Friday Food and Friendship Community Meal Friday March 28. Adam Frederick was lead chef for the Pot Roast & Veggie meal.
8. Worship Committee is planning an outdoor worship service June 8 with picnic lunch to follow. Alternative venues are being considered.
9. New Heights School will host an Art and Music presentation May 20, 2:45 to 3:30 p.m., with participation by FIRST UNITED volunteers.

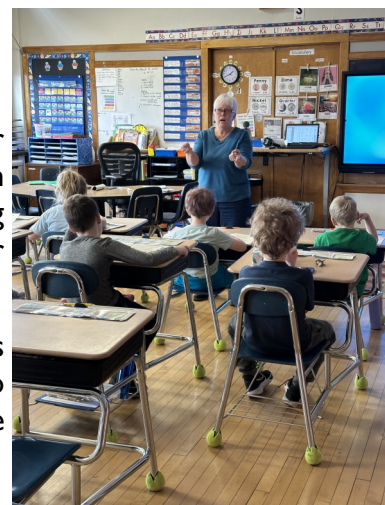
NEW HEIGHTS CHARTER SCHOOL

Greetings Church family,

A special thanks to all our volunteers working with New Heights Charter School (K-12) here in Stillwater. Leesa Levy, Linda Ash, Ben Jackson, Jon Kingstad, Sharon Speich, Patsy Bellman, and Ann Haraldson have all been taking time each week to assist with math, English, craft projects, music (or whatever is needed) for kids K-5th grade.

Also, we are planning a little showcase highlighting some of the music the kids have learned, Tuesday, May 20th from 2:45-3:30. We hope you can pop in to see what the kids have been up to. What a great opportunity to support the community and grow the ministry here at FUMC. Thanks be to God!"

Pastor Jenny



WEDNESDAY DINNERS

All are welcome to the meal served each Wednesday in the Klaus Fellowship Hall at 5:30. The first three weeks are prepared by teams of cooks and a donation of \$7.00 per person is suggested to cover expenses. The final Wednesday of each month is a POTLUCK dinner, so each family is asked to bring a dish to share. This month the potluck will be on April 30.

RECONCILING TASK FORCE Cynthia Frederick, Chair

It was a year ago, last April 21, that we, as a church, unanimously voted to become Reconciling! The Reconciling Committee was pulled together by Pastor Dan Bader, as a response to the Healthy Church Initiative. The report lists, as a way to deepen our spiritual growth, “move forward on becoming a Reconciling church.”

Here is what we have done in the past year (since the vote):



1. We had a party to celebrate the vote!
2. We decorated for the month of June, which is Pride month. The decorations were purchased and put up by some of our youth and young adults who identify as LGBTQIA+. The flags on the tables were a way to help the congregation learn more about the diversity of the LGBTQIA+ community.
3. Hung the Progressive Pride Flag outside the church. (Special thanks to Bonnie Haines and her staff.)
4. Invited Matt Llewellyn-Otten, of OutFront MN, to teach 3 classes, covering vocabulary words, how to be welcoming, and a look at scripture. (He will be back on Sunday, May 18)

Now we are “Living into Being Reconciling”. The more we can open our hearts to make sure everyone who comes through our doors feels welcomed, the more we are truly following what God requires of us. Our focus should not be on what makes us feel comfortable, but on how to make sure visitors to the church feel welcomed and comfortable. Sometimes, that goal requires us to feel UN-comfortable. Thank you for taking the time to fill out the surveys we distributed. We appreciate the feedback we received and hope you know we are always happy to hear your thoughts and ideas. The committee will discuss them at our April meeting, as we begin to plan the next year. Our focus will continue to be on LGBTQIA+ justice and inclusion in the UMC.

Some have brought up the idea that our church should also address racial equity, economic justice, rights of people with disabilities and other social justice issues. We fully support that idea, but at this time, do not see it as the role of the Reconciling Committee. Pastor Jenny is very interested in hearing from people who would like to work with her on those ideas. Please reach out to Pastor Jenny.

Reconciling Committee: Cynthia Frederick, Patsy Bellman, Sharry Swann, Lizzie Bellman, Mike Ptacek, and Pastor Jenny Lind Larsen.

BRIDGE GROUP

The Bridge Group met April 4 at 12:30 p.m. and will meet again May 2 in the Fellowship Hall. Beginners are welcome! Contact the church office at fumcstillwater@gmail.com to join the Bridge Group mailing list.





Special thanks to those who provided money towards Easter flowers and music in memory and/or honor of their loved ones:

Tom & Linda Ash – In Memory of loved ones we have lost

Sharon Dockstader – In memory of Dick Dockstader

Adam Frederick – In memory of Don & June Carter

Tom & Diana Florey – In Memory of Mary Flipp & Ione La Violette

Pat Greupner – In memory of Jerry Greupner

Bonnie Haines – In memory of Joe Haines

*Ann & Mike Haralson – In memory of Stan & Myrtle Stirrat, Henry & Audrey Haraldson,
& in honor of the Haraldson families*

Greg and Kathy Hartman – In honor of Phyllis Hartman & in memory of Jean Hauser

Kathy Kastohryz – In memory of Aunt Rosemary Bochtle & in honor of Henry Sorgand

Jeff Levy – In memory of Nancy and Richard Levy

*Mark and Diana Miller – In memory of Beanie & Evelyn Miller, David Johnson & in honor
of Pat Johnson*

David & Christine Nelson – In honor of our children & grandchildren

Myrtle Potter – In honor of my family

Sandy Ridgway – In honor of our children & grandchildren

Chuck & Kathy Rundquist – In honor of our children

Sharry Swann – In memory of Charles Swann

Judy Trimbo – In memory of Mike Trimbo & Bob Schiel