



# First Family

*We welcome all people... are guided by the teachings and unconditional love of Jesus... are inspired to participate as faithful disciples of Christ.*

## Advent and Christmas at FUMC

“Walking Lightly” is our theme for Advent this year, and it has nothing to do with sneaking around trying to hide gifts from family members.

Advent is the church season where we anticipate new light coming into the world. We believe that the light of God’s love shone particularly brightly in Jesus, and that we are called, as followers of Jesus, to walk in the light.

On December 1 we will consider how we walk lightly in our personal lives, and on December 15 we will consider what walking might mean for how we seek to shape our world.

On December 8 we will celebrate the light that our children and youth bring to our community with their Christmas program. December 22 we will celebrate with a choir cantata.

During the Advent Season, please also watch for a letter from the church offering an opportunity to give a special gift to the ministry of our church and to other important ministries in our community and the world.

### • December 1, Advent Creativity Workshop

In worship, we’ll celebrate communion and hear music from Cast in Bronze, the adult handbell choir, with choir and instrumentalists. Afterwards, come to the Social Hall and let your creativity flow: paint, paste, stamp, and decorate advent wreaths, ornaments, and more.

### • December 8, Christmas Worship by Children & Youth

Children and youth will lead us in worship, focusing on the birth narrative. Invitations to share with family and friends will be available at rehearsals. New handbell group 5Guys will debut, and our littlest ringers, the Ringtones, will also play.

### • December 15, Cookies for a Cause x 2

Strikepoint and Class Ring handbell ensembles will help provide worship music.

Cookie Walk: This old favorite returns to help the Imagine No Malaria initiative. *More information inside.*

Nativity in a Box: Spread Christmas joy by decorating a nativity set of sugar cookies in Lakeview Social Hall after worship. Box them up



**First United  
Methodist Church**

230 E. Skyline Parkway  
Duluth, MN 55811  
[www.fumcduluth.com](http://www.fumcduluth.com)

December 2013

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## Our First Family

**Hospitalizations:** Judy LaTour, Alice Gurske, Richard Gurske

**Lighting:** November 24 to December 7, Marlys and Bill Wolden in appreciation of Cindy and Scott Hedlund and to benefit church utility expenses; December 8-14, Brian and Carrie Moe in memory of Lucille June Brummer and to benefit Life House.

**Births:** Aoife Sybil Rau Bublitz, born October 9 to Erik Rau and Alicia Bublitz. Grandparents from FUMC are Linda and Dan Rau. Martin Lowell Hill, born August 21 in Boise to Ellen and Joshua Hill. Grandparents from FUMC are Anita and Tim Zager.

**No Discovery, Exploration:** Due to many special events this month, Discovery and Exploration will not meet in December.

**Congratulations** to the winners of the Carol M. Donahue Music Scholarship for 2013: Riley Hinnenkamp, piano; Brooke Ballavance, guitar; Parker Hinnenkamp, piano; Caitlin Olsen, cello; Hans Arvidson-Hicks, piano; and Sannah Arvidson-

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## Pastor's Pen

### In Jesus, a mirror and a window

Gift giving is a tradition of the Christmas season. For all the excesses and anxieties of this tradition, there are wonderful intentions behind it. We give in celebration of the birth of Jesus, the Christ child. We recall the story of those who came to him bearing gifts. We give to others because Jesus as the Christ is a gift of God to the world – a unique and special gift. We understand that God gives God's very self in a unique way in Jesus.

As I was thinking about this gift-giving tradition, though, it strikes me that I remember few specifics of the things I have been given at Christmas. What I remember most are the times shared with family and with friends – songs sung, meals enjoyed together, traveling between churches when, as a pastor, I was responsible for Christmas Eve services in four different congregations. The intangibles of love seem to stick with us more deeply than the particular gifts that may also express love.

Two rather intangible yet real gifts that come to us through our faith in Jesus Christ are a mirror and a window, and obviously I speak metaphorically. In Jesus we are given a mirror in which to look at our hearts, our minds, our souls. Where are we loving? Where have we failed? Where are we struggling? Where are we growing? To be a Christian is to be willing to look inside and to open our lives to the Spirit of God we know in Jesus. I hope you find time in this busy season to welcome this gift of self-reflection.

In Jesus we are also given a window to look out at the world. This window of faith invites us to see beauty, wonder, and mystery. These long, dark nights allow us to see more stars, or to see them longer. There is beauty in the falling snow and the changing of the seasons. There is wonder in the way this season brings out so much good in so many.

The window of faith also invites us to see where the world is not yet God's dream for it – to see the violence, the hatred, the war, the poverty, the hunger, the abuse, and the degradation that still exist. We are invited to look at this not with discouragement, although we may be discouraged sometimes, but to look at this and re-commit ourselves to love's work in the world, the work Jesus embodied.

The greatest gift celebrated at Christmas is the gift of love. The message of Jesus the Christ is that before, above, and beyond anything else we are loved. Before, above, beyond anything else, you are loved. Before the mirror, before the window, you are loved. Receive that gift this Christmas. May it bless your new year.

Grace and Peace, *David*

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Next First Family deadline: December 27, 2013

Submit to office or to editor at [connect@fumcduluth.com](mailto:connect@fumcduluth.com)

## Our First Family, continued

Hicks, piano. These young musicians played in a showcase recital after church last Sunday.

**Still need that flu shot?** The St. Louis County Department of Public Health will be offering free flu shots in Three Brothers Chapel starting at 4pm Thursday, December 19 in conjunction with Ruby's Pantry. These shots are offered to anyone who needs one.

**Cards of Thanks:** Angie and I would like to thank everyone for the prayers, e-mails, cards and thoughts during this last hospital stay. This kindness was heart felt and humbling. *Jeff Johnson*

A million thanks to my wonderful church family for all your prayers, calls, cards, and visits during my shoulder surgery and rehab, and also for your continued prayers for my ongoing vision problems. Your concern is a comfort and very good medicine. God bless you all. *Diane Bean*

**Have a Heart:** WDIO-TV and Second Harvest Food Bank will once again hold their "Have a Heart" food drive in our East Parking lot on December 13.

The broadcast, which precedes *Good Morning America*, goes on the air at 5am. Donors can drop off non-perishable food items or cash between 5am and 9am.

FUMC members can sleep in after dropping off their donations at their leisure starting Sunday, December 8. Please place food in the grocery cart in the Atrium and bring cash to the office.

**Poinsettias:** In honor or memory of a loved one, you may want to donate a poinsettia to decorate the church. A form is available in the office.

## Advent, Christmas continued from p. 1

and take them home, give to a friend, or donate to the Arrowhead Jail Chaplaincy Christmas Party. Cookies, frostings, decorations, and nativity boxes will be provided.

### • December 22, *The Voices of Christmas*

We all know the story of the birth of Jesus. Our very faith is enveloped in that story. Yet, sometimes it becomes difficult to see the parallels between the figures of that story and our own lives today. Our 2013 Christmas Cantata, *The Voices of Christmas*, brings that ancient story to a new and renewed meaning for our lives. Please plan to attend the service on December 22 and listen to the choir, the handbells, the strings, and the speakers as they lead us through the story of *The Voices of Christmas*.

### • December 24, Christmas Eve

This Christmas Eve we will offer two opportunities to gather for worship, at 4pm and 10pm. The earlier service will be led by the musicians of Tapestry. The 10pm worship will be led musically by choir, bells, and organ. Candle lighting will end each service. Christmas Eve is a wonderful time to invite family and friends to join us for worship.

## First prayer shawls blessed, ready

This fall, a small group of knitters and crocheters started meeting on a monthly basis, creating prayer shawls as a gesture of support for members of our congregation who are facing an illness or another challenge. The group continues to meet on the second Wednesday of each month from 10am to 11:30am.

If you knit or crochet and would like to participate in this ministry, please feel free to join us! Our next meetings are December 11 and January 8 in the Fireside Lounge. All skill levels are welcome. For more information, contact Barbara Carlson (525-1380) or MaryAnne Korsch (343-8813).

Our shawls are made with prayers for God's love and blessings. By knitting or crocheting these shawls we are sharing our love and concern in a tangible way. You do not need to be an expert to join this group.

These shawls are intended for people who are in need of comfort, healing, or celebration. We hope that the shawls surround each person with God's love and they may be graced with hope and peace.

If you know of someone in our congregation who would benefit from having a shawl, please tell parish nurse Linda Wiig or fill out a form in the office indicating who the shawl is for and other details. Shawls will be delivered by Linda, the person making the request, one of our lay pastors, or a volunteer bringing communion to the home-bound.

A number of shawls were blessed at our last service, so requests will be honored rather soon. Each shawl will have a card indicating that the shawl is from our church and have a prayer written inside.

A way in which you can help this ministry is by donating three skeins of yarn or making a donation for the purchase of yarn. If you do donate yarn we ask that it not be wool. Thank you for your consideration.

## December Quick Look

- 1:** First Sunday in Advent;  
Communion Sunday
- 3:** Nominations Committee,  
6:30pm Fireside Lounge
- 7:** Hmong New Year celebration
- 8:** Children/Youth Christmas  
Program during worship
- 19:** Ruby's Pantry
- 21:** First and Ten Men's Group  
at Damiano Center
- 22:** Christmas Cantata  
during worship
- 24:** Christmas Eve Worship  
4pm and 10pm

## Coming in January

- 1:** New Year's Day
- 5:** Communion Sunday
- 12:** Faith Forum series on  
the parables begins, 9am;  
Confirmation begins, 8:45am
- 16:** Ruby's Pantry
- 19:** Church Conference  
following worship

## Coming Up at First

**Annual Church Conference:** Our annual First UMC Church Conference, a time to celebrate this past year and look to the new one, will be held Sunday, January 19, immediately following our morning worship service. Please put this on your calendar and plan to attend. Thank you.

**The CHUM holiday concert**, a celebration of musical styles and talents from the community, will be held this year at Concordia Lutheran Church, on Woodland Avenue across from Forest Hill. The concert will begin at 7 pm Saturday, December 14, and will be, as always, a wonderful time to share a gift for the important work of CHUM.

**Ruby's Pantry** this month will be on Thursday, December 19. Volunteers are needed to greet our guests, prepare food for distribution, and share the food with them. You may volunteer anytime between 3pm and 8pm and can come for as little as an hour to help out. We are now into our fourth year of this meaningful community outreach that touches many lives, and makes a difference not only to those who come for food, but also to those volunteering.

**First and Ten Men's Group** will meet Monday evening, December 16. Watch for details about time and place in the bulletin. The group will also be serving the noon meal at the Damiano Center on Saturday, December 21. The shift is 8:30am -1:30pm. If you would like to join the group to help, please contact Pastor David.

**Confirmation classes** will begin January 12, 2014. We will use the format we utilized last year, with weekly confirmation classes beginning at 8:45am. More information about the confirmation program will be sent to youth and parents later this month.

## Double your donation

### Gifts matched Dec 3, #GivingTuesday

On December 3, United Methodists are invited to participate in UMC Giving Tuesday, when gifts made online through The Advance will be matched dollar for dollar.

Building on the recent US shopping traditions of Black Friday, Local Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday, UMC Giving Tuesday offers an opportunity to start off the holiday season by giving instead of getting.

At [www.umcmmission.org](http://www.umcmmission.org), you can search over 850 missions and ministries where *100% of your gift goes directly to the project.*

This is a great opportunity to build awareness and maximize support for a project or missionary that is meaningful to you. If you are interested in contributing to the Strong Missions Loaves and Fishes ministry in Costa Rica (November 17 presentation following worship) that Advance number is #3021552. You can specify a gift for disaster relief in the Philippines (or where most needed) by choosing #982450.-

## Fall Faith Forum

### *The Quest for Inner Peacefulness*

Inner peacefulness – peace of mind – is the subject of our Fall Faith Forum series. Faith Forum is held each **Sunday at 9am** in the **Fireside Lounge**.

**Dec. 1:** Cindy Peterson  
Wlosinski—Spiritual direction

**Dec. 8:** Shelley Gruskin—  
Humor and inner peacefulness

**Dec. 15:** David Bard—How  
do you know you are on the right  
path?

Faith Forum will take a holiday break between December 22 and January 5, resuming with a new series on Life Lessons from the Parables beginning January 12.

## Cookie Walk is back

Bakers are needed for a sweetened condensed version of yesteryears' Cookie Walk. Proceeds of the one-day sale on Sunday, December 15 will go to Imagine No Malaria.

Join the fun in the church kitchen any time on December 12 and 13 from 10am to 7pm. Leave donations of flour, sugar, or butter in the kitchen before then; money for ingredients will be accepted in the church office.

The fall nut and coffee sale, which concluded last Sunday, brought in over \$2200 for the malaria mission, and one in five people making pledges this year is also pledging for Imagine No Malaria. Right now we are at about \$12,000 of our \$20,000 pledge, with about a year to go to complete it.

Do your Christmas baking with friends at church, or get your goodies ready-made on December 15. You'll be doing your part to help thwart a mosquito and save a child.

## Wednesday Night Suppers

Thank you to all individuals and groups who have served and prepared meals so far this fall. We have been feeding between 50 and 70 people each Wednesday evening. If your group would like to help with this ministry or you would like to get a group of friends and take on the challenge, you can sign up in the office.

I will gladly orient you to the kitchen and food safe prep. A new kitchen guideline sheet has been prepared with ideas for easily prepared meals.

We always have fun in the kitchen, so why not come join us!  
*Linda Wiig*

## Let's have a healthy season

*from Linda Wiig, Parish Nurse*

Flu season is upon us, so we'll need to take extra precautions to keep ourselves healthy during this holiday season and through the winter.

A flu shot is your first line of defense. Have you had yours yet? Don't wait too long, especially since we will be with more people soon. One option is that the St. Louis County Health Department will be offering free vaccinations at our church December 19 during the Ruby's Pantry food distribution.

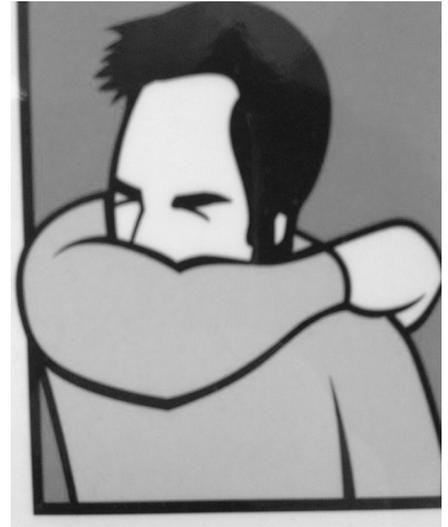
Since we live in the north, our vitamin D levels are not what they need to be unless we take a supplement. If our vitamin D levels are low it tends to decrease our immunity and make us more susceptible to the nasty virus, which promotes our contracting the flu.

What else can we do to help keep ourselves healthy?

Studies have shown that the simple act of washing hands at least four times per day, prior to meals, *when you get home*, and after using the bathroom can decrease gastrointestinal illness by 50%. Good hand washing includes washing the front and back of hands with soap and water for at least 30 seconds—about as long as the "ABCD" song.

Two more important techniques are to cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hand (the vampire sneeze), and to avoid the T Zone, the area that includes your eyes, nose, and mouth. Do not put your fingers into any of these areas, as germs spread easily through your mucous membranes.

Make your body as safe as you can by following these tips. Let's all have a happy, healthy season!



**Gesundheit:**  
Do the vampire sneeze

## FUMC Operating Budget

Year-to-Date October 31, 2013

|                        | Actual                | Budget                |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Income</b>          |                       |                       |
| Envelope/Plate Giving  | \$304,164.01          | \$296,700.00          |
| Other Operating Income | <u>174,240.25</u>     | <u>136,388.30</u>     |
| Total Income           | \$478,404.26          | \$433,088.30          |
| <b>Expense</b>         |                       |                       |
| Total Expense          | <u>\$520,138.44</u>   | <u>\$456,213.62</u>   |
| <b>Net Income</b>      | <u>(\$ 41,734.18)</u> | <u>(\$ 23,125.32)</u> |

All taxes are paid YTD for 2013.

Two apportionment payments are being held.



# First United Methodist Church

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## Weekly Our regular schedule

### Sundays

- 9:00am No Discovery/Exploration  
Parents Bible Study - St  
Faith Forum - FSL 12/1, 8, 15  
10:00am Worship - S  
Wee Wonder - 105  
3:30pm T'ai Chi - LSH we

### Mondays

- Noon Gamblers Anonymous - St  
7:00pm Whole Birth Yoga - TBC

### Tuesdays

- 8:00am Men's Study Group - FSL  
6:00pm Gamblers Anonymous - St

### Wednesdays except 12/25

- 4:45pm 5Guys - BR  
5:15pm Ringtones - BR  
JAM - EL  
5:45pm Supper - LSH se  
6:00pm Tapestry - S  
6:30pm Cast In Bronze - BR  
Youth Group - CW, 112  
7:30pm Sanctuary Choir - TBC  
7:40pm Class Ring - BR

### Thursdays

- 9:00am Faithfully Fit - EL  
6:00pm T'ai Chi - LSH we (CW 12/19)

### Fridays

- 9:00am Alcoholics Anonymous - TBC  
9:30am Women's Study Group - Lib

### Saturdays

- 9:00am T'ai Chi - LSH we

## Day by Day Monthly and one-time events

### Sunday, December 1

- 10:00am Communion during worship

### Tuesday, December 3

- 5:30pm Worship Committee - FSL  
6:30pm Nominations Committee - FSL

### Wednesday, December 4

- 9:30am UMW Board - Lib

### Thursday, December 5

- 5:30pm Finance Committee - St

### Saturday, December 7

- 9:00am Hmong New Year - LSH, K

### Monday, December 9

- 6:00pm SPRC - Lib  
7:00pm First & Ten - St  
Priscilla Circle - FSL

### Tuesday, December 10

- 2:00pm Loud Laughing Ladies - FSL  
7:00pm Church Council - FSL

### Wednesday, December 11

- 10:00am Prayer Shawl Group - FSL

### Thursday, December 12

- 10:00am Cookie Baking - K  
1:00pm Deborah Circle - FSL

### Friday, December 13

- 5:00am Have a Heart Food Drive -  
East Lot  
10:00am Cookie Baking - K

### Saturday, December 14

- 8:00am Breakfast with Santa - LSH, K

### Monday, December 16

- 10:00am Rachel Circle - FSL

### Wednesday, December 18

- 9:30am Naomi Circle - Cloquet, MN

### Thursday, November 21

- 4:00pm Ruby's Pantry - LSH, S  
Free Flu Shots - TBC

### Monday, December 23

- 5:30pm Ruby's Committee - Lib

### Tuesday, December 24

- 9:30am Extollers - S  
4:00pm Christmas Eve Worship - S  
led by Tapestry  
10:00pm Christmas Eve Worship - S  
with choir, bells, organ, & more



This calendar includes only those events open to Church members or the general public. Other events are scheduled in the building, but not listed.