



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.

December 2017



Advent and Christmas Events

Sun, Dec 3: Christmas Worship by Children and Youth

Don't miss the fun! Youth-led Version Births play, Ringtones handbell choir and other instrumentalists, vocal solo by Elise Hintzman, JAM & JAM Jr and children sing, costumes and lots of carols.

Sunday, Dec 10. Sermon: The Transformation of the Grinch.

After worship: Nativity in a Box – Nativity Cookie Decorating
Decorate a set of nativity character sugar cookies to take home or to share with a friend. Meet in Lakeview Social Hall after worship. Pre-baked cookies, icing and decorations provided. Bring your own creativity!

Sunday, Dec. 17: "Holy Light" – a Candlelight Service of Carols

Plan to attend a special music service during our morning worship service on Sunday, Dec. 17 at 10:00 am. Christ's birth will be told through scripture readings, poetry and music offered by FUMC's Sanctuary Choir, Tapestry, and Cast in Bronze, as well as a variety of instruments including organ, strings, and percussion.

Sunday, December 24:

Christmas Eve Worship Services

10am- Christmas Eve In The Morning

Please join us for a time of welcoming the Christ child as we share Christmas Holy Communion together and experience beautiful handbell and vocal music and message. The sermon in the morning will be different from the afternoon/evening services so feel free to attend in the morning and afternoon/evening.

Sermon: The Impact of Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer

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**First United
Methodist Church**

230 E. Skyline Parkway
Duluth, MN 55811
www.fumcduluth.com



Our First Family

Hospitalizations: Darlene Brown, Doug Buell, Lowell Ferminich, Dick Peterson, Rollie Strand

Church Lighting: From Brian & Carrie Moe in memory of Lucille June Brummer, granddaughter, from December 10 -16, 2017 to benefit the Parish Nurse Fund.

Condolences to Mary Ann Lucas Houx (and Ollie Houx) on the death of Mary Anne's daughter, Debra. Services will be at our church on Saturday, December 9th @ 11am.

Attendance

Oct 29	262
Nov 5	301
Nov 12	274
Nov 19	240
Nov 26	227

First UMC/The Coppertop T-shirts, and Logo Wear: All T-shirt sizes from children to adult are \$12. Logo Wear has several options with prices from \$13.75 to \$56.50. Tee shirts are available now for immediate purchase as the supply lasts. Logo wear can be ordered up to the deadline of December 3 for delivery by December 20 in time for Christmas.

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On the journey with you

The Power of Love

Many years ago, God looked down upon the world in profound sorrow. Humanity, God's greatest creation, was in trouble and they didn't even seem to know it. Instead of embracing peace, generosity, inclusivity, understanding and love – humanity embraced conflict, materialism, arrogance and indifference.

So God became a baby – born to poor parents in an obscure village. His first home was a stable where the animals lived. How could the One who so dramatically changed the world have arrived in such humble means? How could the One who offers us salvation and eternal life come into the world as a helpless being?

Scripture give us great insight in Philippians 2:5-11: *“Our attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross. Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

In the birth of Christ was born a power that could overcome self-centeredness, war, hatred, division and greed with a self-giving, all-encompassing love. In the birth of Christ was born a power that could free us to love people as they are ... to get to know who they are inside ... to go to the poorest, most desolate places and find love and hope – find God even there, perhaps especially there.

Christmas Blessings,
Pastor Jeanine

First Family

First United Methodist Church

230 E Skyline Parkway, Duluth, MN 55811
218/727-5021 info@fumcduluth.com

Pastor Jeanine Alexander

Next First Family deadline: Dec 22

Submit to connect@fumcduluth.com



fumcduluth.com

Our First Family, *continued*

Blood Drive Dec 12

Many thanks to all who have donated blood in the past. The Bloodmobile returns on Tuesday, Dec 12 for healthy people age 16-adult. If you have never donated blood, please consider giving this time. The need is great, and there is no better gift than a pint of life. Sign up in the church office.

Coppertop Night at Bentleyville

Monday, Dec 4 from 4 to 9 PM

The Hospitality Team invites you to share the joy and magic of the season with our community.

Friendly folks are needed to serve in three areas – costumed characters, character “handlers”, and parking lot helpers. Dress up in a toasty warm character costume: Frosty, Reindeer, or perhaps a Penguin! Or support a costumed character as a handler. Many of you have experience directing traffic here at church; perhaps you’re ready for the big time at Bentleyville!

If you would like to join the fun, look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

2017 Coppertop Craft & Bake Sale

Kudos to our United Methodist Women and countless volunteers for another fantastic fall sale. \$5,374.39 was raised for ministries to women and children in the Twin Ports and beyond. Also, the book sale collected \$630.57 for the FUMC library.

Christmas Eve Services, *continued*

4pm – Christmas Eve Service

All children will have the opportunity to wear a costume and participate in an unrehearsed nativity pageant. We will experience the familiar hymns and Scriptures. Mid-way through the service children will have the choice between staying in worship for the Christmas Eve sermon or attending a special children’s activity, a mini-birthday party for baby Jesus. Music by Tapestry and the organ. This is an interactive, meaningful service for everyone and will end with candlelight singing of Silent Night.

Sermon: When We Have a Charlie Brown Christmas ...

10pm – Candlelight Service

This Christmas Eve service will include the choir, Extollers alumni bell choir, Scripture, Christmas carols and a message of hope and life. It will be a sacred, meaningful time of welcoming Christ in our midst.

Sermon: When We Have a Charlie Brown Christmas ...

Due to the lateness of the last service, there will be no Toddler Room services offered at 10 pm.

End-of-year giving to the Capital Campaign

As the end of the year approaches it is prime time to review your charitable giving. Please prayerfully consider making a generous gift to our church capital campaign.

It might be your first gift to the campaign, or taking advantage of an IRA rollover/disbursement benefit, or paying ahead on your pledge. All of these circumstances are good opportunities for you to think about your giving. If you have questions please talk with Paula Davidson in the church office.

You can also support the campaign by buying a Christmas wreath or door swag. Maybe one for you and one for your neighbor.

The remaining projects for the campaign include the upper Sanctuary Windows, parking lots, restroom updates, organ refurbishing and Building Fund replenishment. \$67,000 remains to be raised by December 31, 2018.

Faith Forum

“Service Above Self - What’s Happening in Duluth?” is the theme for the Fall 2017 Faith Forum Series at FUMC.

Faith Forum meets weekly at 9:00am Sundays in the Fireside Lounge. Adults and older teens are invited to attend any or all sessions.

Speakers and dates are listed below.

Dec. 3, Dr. M. Imran Hayee, Islam - What We Need to Know ; **Dec. 10**, Lee Stuart, CHUM - We Are United in Ministry; **Dec. 17**, Anne Miller, Celeste Dalman, Verna Porter — On Grieving: It’s a Many-Faceted Thing,



Sacred Heart Concert

Mark your calendars and plan on attending the Holiday Concert at Sacred Heart Music Center (201 West 4th St., Duluth) on Sunday, December 3 at 3 pm.

This annual concert features young musicians from our community, including our own Class Ring handbell choir; Duluth High School's Sterling Strings (with Rowan Racette playing bass), Duluth High School's Choralaires (with Sannah Arvidson-Hicks singing soprano), and several young organ students (including Parker Hinnenkamp) playing Sacred Heart's Felgemaker pipe organ.

The North Wind Flute Choir will also play festive music for the season, and a carol sing-along will be led by David Tryggstad, Resident Organist at Sacred Heart Music Center. Suggested donation \$10.

Pause to consider miracles

From Linda Wiig, Parish Nurse

December, the month of miracles, love, gifts and joy, and the celebration of Christmas.

As Harold Kushner has pointed out in his meditation, *To Life: A Celebration of Jewish Being and Thinking*, if it were not for Hanukkah, we wouldn't be celebrating Christmas. For if the Maccabees had not rebelled against their Greek oppressors, the Jewish faith would have been no more. These were courageous people, faithful, and grateful that their oil lamps remained lit for eight days. "If the Maccabees had not been able to restore the temple to the Jewish people," Kushner has said, "there would have been no Jewish community for Jesus to be born into a century and a half later. No one would have remembered the messianic promises he claimed to fulfill. Without Hanukkah, there would have been no Christmas."

Do we pause enough to really ponder all the miracles of our lives, the gifts we have received—like grace, wisdom, and the love of family and friends? Let us nurture our souls, and be givers and receivers of authentic gifts: love, reassurance, charity, courage, trust, peace, joy and awe that we are here capable of doing what we can for one another.

I would like to remind you that a wonderful gift you can give is the gift of life in the form of a blood donation. Our next blood drive is Dec 12 from 2:30 to 6 pm. If you are able, you may sign up by calling the office, stopping by, or signing up after the church service. The donation process is streamlined if you answer all the pre-donation questions on-line anytime on the 12th at mbc.org under the drop-down menu *I donate*. Your donation time is 30 to 45 minutes total. Thank you.

Did you have those conversations over Thanksgiving about your life wishes if you are unable to speak for yourself due to illness or injury? Well, if not, take advantage of family gatherings to come. It's just another important way to give and to receive. Go to HonoringChoicesMn.org or TheConversationProject.org for helpful information, or pick up information in the church office or see me.

Have a blessed Christmas. *Linda*

Shiny Paper collectors break record, set new goal

Our Shiny Paper collection hit an all-time record this year, redirecting high quality paper clutter to new life as a marketable resource. Your donated paper, with a little help from our crew of baggers, stackers and haulers, brought in a total of \$1,480 for 2017.

On Nov 11 we delivered 6,590 lbs. of paper and received

\$658 for FUMC ministries. Since this project began in 2014, our annual goal of \$1,200 has had mixed results. But after this year's success, we have set our sights on \$1,450 for 2018.

Collection has already begun for our next trip to Verso Paper Mill, scheduled for Saturday, March 10. With your help... can we match our 2017 total

income?

FUMC Shiny Paper Crew:
Judy LaTour, David & Mary Grant, Charley Korsch, Steve Hansen, Tony Hauschildt, Karl Lindgren, Kent Giese, Todd Kurth, Bailey Olson, and Richard Gurske. *Always room for one more!*

Calendar • December 2017

Weekly

Our regular schedule

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

Sundays

- 9:00am Faith Forum - FSL
- 9:00am Family Faith Formation - 112, 105, 106, Lib, CW
- 10:00am Worship - S
Wee Wonder - 105
- 3:30pm T'ai Chi - LSH we

Mondays

- Noon Gamblers Anonymous - St
- 3:00pm Spirit Yoga - TBC- 1
- 7:00pm Whole Birth Yoga - TBC

Tuesdays

- 5:00pm T'ai Chi - LSH we
- 6:00pm Gamblers Anonymous - St
- 6:00pm Moms' Yoga - TBC

Wednesdays

- 4:15pm Child Care - L Nur -2
- 4:30pm Bible Study - FSL-2
- 5:00pm JAM & PB Band - TBC-2
- 5:15pm Supper - LSH se -2
- 5:30pm Ringtones - BR -2
Explorers - 112 - 2
JAM Jr. - TBC 2
- 5:45pm Sanctuary Choir - EL - 3
- 6:30pm Youth Group - CW -3
Confirmation - LSH we 3
- 6:45pm Cast in Bronze - BR 2
BTwixt - 112 - 2
- 7:30pm Tapestry - S - 3
- 7:45pm Class Ring - BR - 2

Thursdays

- 9:00am Faithfully Fit - EL
- 6:00pm T'ai Chi - LSH we

Fridays

- 8:00am Men's Study Group - FSL
- 9:00am Alcoholics Anonymous - TBC

Saturdays

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

Day by Day

Monthly & one-time

Saturday, December 2

- 9:00am Hmong New Year Celebr LSH

Wednesday, December 6

- 9:30am UMW Board Meeting - Lib

Thursday, December 7

- 5:00pm Trustees Meeting - FSL

Friday, December 8

- 5:00am Have a Heart Food Drive -
East Lot

Saturday, December 9

- 8:00am Breakfast with Santa - LSH, K
- 9:00am Community Healing CircleTBC
- 1:00pm Debra Eckert Memorial Service
- TBC ?

Monday, December 11

- 7:00pm Priscilla Circle - FSL

Tuesday, December 12

- 2:00pm Loud Laughing Ladies - FSL
- 2:30pm Blood Drive - East Lot

Wednesday, December 13

- 9:30am Prayer Shawl Ministry - FSL

Thursday, December 14

- 1:00pm Deborah Circle - FSL

Saturday, December 16

- 10:00am Lessons & Carols Rehears - S

Sunday, December 17

- 11:30am New Member Class - Lib

Monday, December 18

- 10:00am Rachel Circle - FSL

Tuesday, December 19

- 6:00pm Leaders Meeting - EL
- 7:00pm Ad Council - EL

Wednesday, December 20

- 9:00am Naomi Circle - FSL

Thursday, December 21

- 4:00pm Ruby's Pantry - S, LSH

Saturday, December 23

- 9:30am Extollers - S

Sunday, December 24

- 10:00am Worship - S
- 4:00pm Evning Candlelight Worship - S
- 10:00pm Candlelight Worship - S

Thursday, December 28

- 5:00pm Finance Committee - FSL

Calendar may change - check www.fumcduluth.com for updates.

- 1- except 12/25
- 2. except 12/20, 12/27
- 3 - except 12/27

Cookies needed for St. Louis County Jail holiday party

For many years, bakers from First UMC have joined those from many other congregations in providing cookies and treats for the inmates and staff at the jail. Once again, Jail Chaplain Justin Thomson has asked for our contributions.

If you like to bake, but don't have a lot of people around your house to enjoy holiday goodies, please consider making something for the County Jail Holiday Party. Or, if you already have plans to bake this year, make an extra couple dozen. Bars, candy, cookies and snacks can brighten these winter days and share the love of God with the prisoners in our care.

Cookies and treats should be wrapped in disposable containers and delivered to the church office before 12 noon on Tuesday, Dec 12. Due to food allergies, please do not include any nuts or coconut.



Open House at Pastor Jeanine's New Home

All of you are invited to drop by my home **Saturday, December 2nd anytime 1-5pm** to see my house, to visit, and have a treat or two. My address is 320 Coffee Creek Blvd; Duluth 55811. **No gifts please, but a donation to the food shelf would be welcomed** (I'm told that the food shelf is very much in need of canned peas -- clients want them and the food shelf doesn't have an inexpensive source from which to purchase them). I look forward to this first, of many times, of welcoming you in my home.

Need to get an item into First Family? Don't know the deadline?

The next deadline is published monthly in the masthead at the bottom of the 2nd page of the newsletter.

If you've misplaced your last newsletter just call the office at 727-5021.

Strikepoint in concert

Strikepoint, our concert handbell ensemble, will be ringing Christmas bells with concerts at St. Michael's Church, 4901 E Superior Street, at 11:30 am and Ecumen Lakeshore at 1:30 pm, both on Saturday, Dec 9. They also have a performance with the Arrowhead Chorale at the Depot's Great Hall at 3 pm Sunday, Dec 17. Come and catch a show!

Early morning food drive

FUMC will host the WDIO-TV/Second Harvest Northern Lakes Food Bank holiday "Have a Heart" food drive on Friday, December 8.

Bring non-perishable food items or cash donations to the West Parking Lot between 6am and 9am and you might be on TV. To sleep in, drop your contribution off in the narthex shopping cart anytime from now until the crack of dawn December 8.

Hmong New Year Celebration

For a number of years, First UMC has helped sponsor and provided space for the Hmong community in the Twin Ports and Northwestern Wisconsin to celebrate their new year. This event is free and open to the public. If you have never experienced this celebration, it is a wonderful time to get to know about the history and traditional customs of some of our neighbors. The event is from 9am to 5pm on Saturday, December 2, with a program at 11am and a free lunch following.

Ruby's Pantry

With the holidays just around the corner, food received through Ruby's Pantry becomes even more important. This month's distribution will be Thursday, December 21. Volunteers are needed to greet our guests, prepare food for distribution, and share the food with them. You may volunteer anytime between 3 and 8 pm, and can come for as little as an hour to help out.

FUMC Operating Budget

Year-to-Date October 31, 2017

	Actual	Budget
Income		
Envelope/Plate Giving	\$323,756.39	\$336,762.95
Other Operating Income	<u>156,927.13</u>	<u>153,604.14</u>
Total Income	\$480,683.52	\$490,367.09
Expense		
Total Expense	<u>\$497,892.64</u>	<u>\$493,040.10</u>
Net Income	<u>(\$ 17,209.12)</u>	<u>(\$ 2,673.01)</u>

All apportionments, taxes and payables YTD have been paid.

Bishops consider 3 models for church future

by Heather Hahn, UMNS

United Methodist bishops are exploring three possible models for how the church should handle LGBTQ inclusion.

The models come to the bishops from the Commission on a Way Forward, which has the task of trying to find a way for the church to stay together despite deep divides over homosexuality.

The bishops have been meeting in closed session Nov. 6-9 to discern whether the commission is heading in the right direction. The bishop-appointed commission has three more meetings planned early next year, and the bishops do not plan to develop any final recommendations until May 2018.

The possibilities under consideration:

- Affirm the current Book of Discipline language and place a high value on accountability. The church policy book says the practice of homosexuality “is incompatible with Christian teaching” and lists officiating at a same-gender union or being a “self-avowed practicing” gay clergy member as chargeable offenses under church law.

- Remove restrictive language and place a high value on contextualization. This sketch also specifically protects the rights of those whose conscience will not allow them to perform same-gender weddings or ordain LGBTQ persons.

- Create multiple branches that have clearly defined values such as accountability, contextualization justice. This

model would maintain shared doctrine and services and one Council of Bishops.

Each possibility includes a way to exit for those church entities that feel called to leave the denomination.

In a press statement, the Council of Bishops said, each possible model represents

values within the council and across the church.

In its interim report, the commission did not express a preference for any of the models. The bishops, likewise, are not expressing a preference at this time.

Bishops, like the United
continued last page

REMEMBER THOSE YOU LOVE

*With a Poinsettia during
the Christmas Season*

**Your poinsettia will be used to decorate the church for
Christmas. You may take your plant home
after the 10 p.m. Candlelight Service
on Christmas Eve to enjoy throughout the holidays.**

**The names of honorees and donors will be published in
the Christmas Eve bulletins.**



Your Name: _____

Person to be honored: _____

Circle one:

In honor in memory in appreciation

Price per plant \$15.00



First United Methodist Church

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Bishops consider 3 models for future, *continued*

Methodists they lead, have different interpretations of Scripture and different views of how the church should minister with LGBTQ individuals.

Among those participating in the discussions were bishops whose home countries have outlawed same-sex activity and bishops who advocate for eliminating church restrictions, including Mountain Sky Area Bishop Karen Oliveto — the denomination's first openly gay episcopal leader.

Still, a number of bishops told United Methodist News Service of feeling a good spirit in the room as they prayerfully considered the church's future.

"Operate with a heart of peace and an openness," Bishop

Sandra Steiner Ball, one of the moderators, told her fellow bishops, according to the release.

She added that all three models grew out of the commission's mission, vision and scope.

"Each one of these models connects to a story and experience that is represented in this body," said Steiner Ball, who also leads the West Virginia Conference.

The commission will process the bishops' feedback from this week's discussions. The press statement said the commission also will continue to welcome further input about the possible models from church members, shared through their respective bishops.

The commission plans to share the resources used by the bishops in their conversations at this meeting on its website. Ultimately, whatever the bishops propose will go before the lay and clergy delegates of a special General Conference **on Feb. 23-26, 2019**, in St. Louis, Missouri. Throughout the meeting, the bishops' worship services have focused on unity.

Bishop Samuel Quire Jr., who leads the Liberia Conference, invoked the power of the Holy Spirit to make a "vibrant church," "an open church" and "a tolerant church," during the Nov. 8 service.

"We know that when your Holy Spirit is in control, you will land the ship called United Methodist into safe harbor."